The Organist.

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Editorial.

WE hope to bring an occasional portrait and biography of a leading organist or composer in order to vary our reading matter. This is in line with our other marks of progress.

SOME QUEER OFFERTORIES.

Picture to yourself the deacons or vestrymen walking during church service slowly down the carpeted aisles and waiting at each pew while the plate is passed from sitter to sitter, amid a gentle shower of bank notes and the melodious tinkle of silver. From the organ loft meanwhile come strains of the offertory. Beginning softly, it gradually swells until, as the deacons walk up the aisles and hand in the plates full of money to the pastor, it bursts forth in a volume of triumphant sound.

If you have an ear for music perhaps you might have detected some strangely familiar phrase in the music, something that seemed to come into your memory only to vanish again, making you wonder what the reminiscence was. The melody as a whole seemed new, and yet there were occasional snatches that appeared like old friends in new garments.

Well, your ear did not play you false. It was something you had heard before—something, it is true, played a little faster and with a certain snap which that gently swelling offertory lacked. Don't start—but that offertory was nothing less than a slow version of a song which possibly you had heard the previous night in one of the music halls—a song with a familiar refrain:

There'll be a hot time in the old town to-night, my baby!

Think of "A Hot Time in the Old Town" used as an offertory in church. It seems strangely out of place, and it might possibly be suggested that the choirmaster might imitate the concert manager in one of the wild mining camps and hang out the sign: "Don't shoot the organist. He is doing his best."

A famous divine once asked, when some one objected to a secular tune which was introduced in the musical services of his church: "Why let the devil have all the good music?" Possibly the organist in question might ask: "Why let the devil have all the popular tunes that are going?" After all, what's in a name. The title "A Hot Time in the Old Town" doesn't sound very religious, but take the melody, make a few changes in harmony, play it a little slower than the time of the song, and you have a very effective offertory.

Nor is this the only tune whose origin was the very reverse of religious which organists, by certain subtle musical changes, have been enabled to introduce in church service. The organist and choirmaster of the "Old First" Presbyterian Church, in this city, Mr. William C. Carl, a pupil of the famous Alexandre Guilmant, of La Trinite, Paris, tells me that a favorite method among organists of securing novel music when there is a dearth of novelties in organ composition is to take any tune which they may have heard on the streets and vary it so that it becomes suitable for use in church.

Nothing could be further from their intention than to be sacrilegious. They often do not know the title, let alone the words of the melody they have utilized. Mr. Carl himself, in speaking of this matter yesterday, cited "A Hot Time in the Old Town" as one of the examples that had come under his personal observation, and gave me a number of other similar examples.

One instance which he cited to me as of very frequent occurrence is most amusing. A feature of many classical compositions, as well as of numerous modern serious musical works is what is known among musicians as "figured bass." In untechnical language, it consists of filling out the intervals between the fundamental bass notes in the harmony. To be even more untechnical, it might be compared with the "extending" or writing out of shorthand memoranda. Mr. Carl says that one of the finest "figured basses" that can be used to fill out the chords of an "Amen" is the familiar phrase to which "Charlie, Make Room for Your Uncle" is set.

The choir holds the long sustained chords of the "Amen," supported by the full organ, while "Charlie, Make Room for Your Uncle" is played on the pedals, far down in the bass. As the voice carries the melodic phrase and the organ resounds clearly and strongly the popular twist given by the pedals does not penetrate sufficiently through the volume of sound to shock the sensibilities of the congregation. It simply has the effect of an artistically figured bass. In fact, in church music "Charlie, Make Room for Your Uncle" may be said to be a classic.

Perhaps nothing would surprise Miss Anna Held more than to be told that she has enriched the repertory of religious music. Yet when she stood up and sang, with many suggestive smirks and quivers:

I'm fond of romps and games, you see;
I wish you'd come and play with me.

She started a tune going which soon crept into the churches The refrain of the original tune is in six-eighth time, the usual rythm of pastoral music. And if this tune is taken and played note for note just as it was written, except in slower tempo, it makes a really capital pastoral, interlude, or offertory, especially for services in the early spring. Some organists, however, change the six eighth to common or four-quarter time alter and enrich the harmonies, and thus make a majestic and effective postlude or afterpiece to the services. So that the congregation leaves the church to the solemn strains of music which in its original form was set to

For I have such a way wiz me,
Do not think it wrong;
I wish you'd come and play wiz me
All the day long.

Organists tell an anecdote of a funeral service at which the officiating clergyman, after pronouncing a panegyric upon the deceased, said: "I will conclude my remarks by asking the organist to play on offertory which was a great favorite with the corpse." Thereupon the organist began a solo in the form of choral in a solemn, minor key, an offertory which the deceased, who was one of the music committee of the church, had taken a liking to the first time he heard it and had often asked to have repeated. In fact, he had frequently passed around the plate to its measured strains.

This offertory "which was a favorite with the corpse" was "Yankee Doodle" in the original four quarter time. All the notes which form the tune were retained, only slight changes in their length being introduced, but the whole was played in a minor key, instead of in major. Even in the original major key, however, "Yankee Doodle" if played slowly, makes an excellent choral, without the slightest suggestion of its secular origin.

While the congregation is being seated, before the services, the organist plays a prelude. Sometimes you hear a melody in four-quarter time, full of religious import and admirably calculated to predispose the listener to solemnity. Who, hearing it under these circumstances, could imagine for a moment that it was nothing more than a variation in slow time and with massive chords of

My gal is a high born lady,
She's black, but not too shady;
Feathered like a peacock, just as gay;
She is not colored, she was born that way.

One of the most curious changes made by organists in the character of a melody is the conversion of part of the last division of Rossini's "William Tell" overture into funeral music. The original is in two-quarter time, is played with extreme rapidity and is a dashing bit of orchestral music—a *tour de force* in rapid playing. Changed to four-quarter time and played in minor key it makes a sombre interlude in a funeral service not wholly unlike the funeral march in one of Beethoven's sonatas.

Those who have seen "Tristan and Isolde" will remember that when the curtain rises on the first act a sailor is heard singing a farewell song to his Irish maid. The phrase to which he sings the words

Frisch weht der wind der heimath zu,
Mein Irisch kind, wo weilest du?
(The wind blows freshly homeward now,
My Irish love, where lingerest thou?)

becomes one of the principal leading motives of the act. It is called the "ocean motif," which gently undulates through the more subdued scenes, but seems fairly to surge around Isolde as she calls upon the powers of the tempest to rise up in their wrath and shatter the ship. In the sailor's song, however, its characteristics are those of a wild, weird romance of the sea. Organists, however, take this phrase and, by setting it to a running apeggio accompaniment, convert it into a solo in the communion service.

Mr. Carl concluded his interesting chat by relating a curious and amusing incident which came under his own observation in a church in which the services are intoned. The officiating clergyman was intoning that part of the service in which the words "Et cum sancto spiritu" occur. Suddenly he noticed a drought of cold air coming from an open door. Without interrupting his intoning and preserving the exact rythm of the Latin words, he looked at the sexton and continued: "Barney, go shut that door!" —*New York Herald.*

[The above sketch is rather amusing, but, if given a sober second thought, it will most likely impress the reader as being outside "the eternal fitness of things," both from a religious and musical standpoint. The church has many

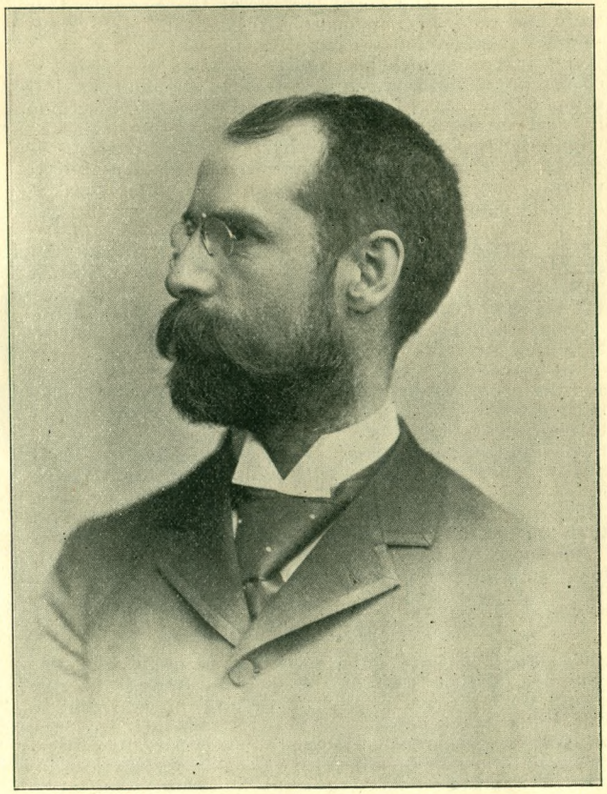
sweet and beautiful names, "The House of God," "The Sanctuary," "The House of Prayer," etc. Does it seem proper that in this sacred retreat the songs of the dance hall and variety stage should be brought to the ear and mind? Even when distinguished by enriched harmony and a slower movement, they are entirely out of place and season in a church service, which was not originally intended as an opportunity for the organist to display his skill in playing a "figured bass" or serving up a hash of street melodies. Public worship is a means of grace for the uplifting of the soul toward heavenly things, and *sacred* music is an important factor in this service. But we hold to the opinion that it *should* be sacred, so much so, as to have nothing in common with the dance hall, stage, or street ditty.

From a musical standpoint, the state of affairs as described by Mr. Carl, is quite as lamentable as the religious feature. The pipe organ is the most dignified and noble of all instruments, and the greatest of composers have contributed rich treasures of harmony for its use. When we pause to consider that Bach, Handel, Mozart, and Mendelssohn, (of the classic German school) have bequeathed us such a glorious array of music entirely adapted to the organ, and then remember what Guilmant, Lemmons, Rheinberger, Buck, and Eddy have done for the modern school, we feel that there is no need for "A Hot Time in the Old Town" as an organ voluntary, nor for any other music of the same class. Association has much to do with our religious emotions. Therefore let us have music in church (both instrumental and vocal) that is associated with the sanctuary, and *not* drawn from the lowest and most debased order of musical composition.—EDITOR.]

P. A. SCHNECKER.

We are pleased to introduce to our readers this month one of the most scholarly musicians of the land. Mr. Schnecker's face is an expression of his highly artistic temperament developed under the most favorable circumstances afforded by our great metropolis and by his own native land; for, like many others of our leading musicians, while thoroughly Americanized, he is a native of Germany, where the foundations of his musical culture were laid. In 1865, while yet in his teens, he came to this country, and soon attracting the attention of the Rev. Dr. Muhlenberg, founder of St. Luke's Hospital and one of the foremost and most public-spirited of his generation of clergymen, he was at once introduced to the most scholarly and cultured atmosphere in the city of New York. Dr. Muhlenborg took him into his own home, where he lived during the next six years, and encouraged him in his musical work and education, persuading him to give his time largely to the cultivation of church music, as an organist, director of choirs, and composer. To the inspiration and help of this noble clergyman of broad and accurate culture, Mr. Schnecker owes very much, not only in the thoroughness and highly artistic character of his musical work, but in the devout churchliness which it all evinces, and his refined taste regarding the details of divine service whether musical or otherwise. It is not surprising that he reveres with deep piety the memory of this early friend.

Mr. Schnecker's studies in piano and violin playing were carried on principally in Germany, but he gives the credit for his mastery of the organ and for the main part of his training in harmony, counterpoint, and other branches



of musical science to Mr. Samuel P. Warren, who for many years was the organist of Grace Church in New York City. In 1874 Mr. Schnecker returned to Germany to develop still further his skill in composition and other branches under the guidance of Dr. Oscar Paul, Ernst Richter, and other masters at the Leipzig Conservatory.

Mr. Schnecker has been organist and music director at the West Presbyterian Church since 1872, twenty-five years, under the pastorates of Dr. Hastings, Dr. Paxton, and now Mr. Evans. In January, a testimonial concert was tendered him by his church in honor of his completing a quarter of a century of distinguished service, at which were present not only the *elite* of that immensely wealthy and aristocratic congregation, but distinguished musical people interested in sacred music. He was assistant organist, from 1870 to 1880, of St. Thomas' Church. He has played at many concerts, organ exhibitions, and other public occasions, but owing to the great demand on his time by pupils and by the best publishers, he has of late years appeared less frequently at such performances.

In his work as organist of a congregation that makes the most imperious musical demands of any Presbyterian church in America, Mr. Schnecker has been eminently successful, as his long term of service indicates. With an appropriation of from eight to twelve thousand dollars a year from the music committee, he has always had the finest quartet choir in the land, paying salaries to single singers exceeding those of many strong and popular clergymen. With such help he has been able to render the most elaborate and difficult music of the highest artistic character. Much of this he has himself written, as he enjoys the composition of sacred music more than any other. With such singers at his command and with the church's desire for only the very best music, many of his compositions are far beyond the ability of average volunteer choirs, but they are highly prized by trained quartets. Despite the early Episcopal influences in his development, Mr. Schnecker's style is somewhat intense and florid. He has large harmonic resources, and his power of melodic invention is very great. He sometimes introduces quite startling harmonic contrasts, which add to the intensity and force of his music. He usually extemporizes his voluntaries, his improvisations partaking of the character of his written compositions, but showing a greater freedom in the development of his themes, and a spontaneity and freshness that elude a writer when he crystalizes his thought upon paper. That he has pleased one of the most fastidious congregations in the world for twenty-five years shows the wealth of his musical resources.

But while sacred music is Mr. Schnecker's chosen and favorite field, he has written and published many secular compositions; piano pieces, secular songs, orchestral numbers, and what not, including many transcriptions for piano. He has also compiled several books of organ music that have been well received.

He has won deserved recognition as a teacher, his pupils including many professional organists and pianists. Although his rates are very high, more pupils apply for instruction than he can possibly find time to teach. It is his power of artistic interpretation which has won him this high standing as an instructor. He is a sight reader of extraordinary fluency and ease, playing the most difficult music at sight not only with accuracy and grace, but with remarkable taste and feeling.

Mr. Schnecker is a gentleman of great geniality and kindliness, his cordial and uniformly winning manners endearing him to all who are brought into personal relations with him. While he still speaks German, his fluent English does not betray his nativity either in its syntax or accent. He lives in an elegant home on East Fifty-seventh Street, whose adornment reveals the refined taste of himself and wife.

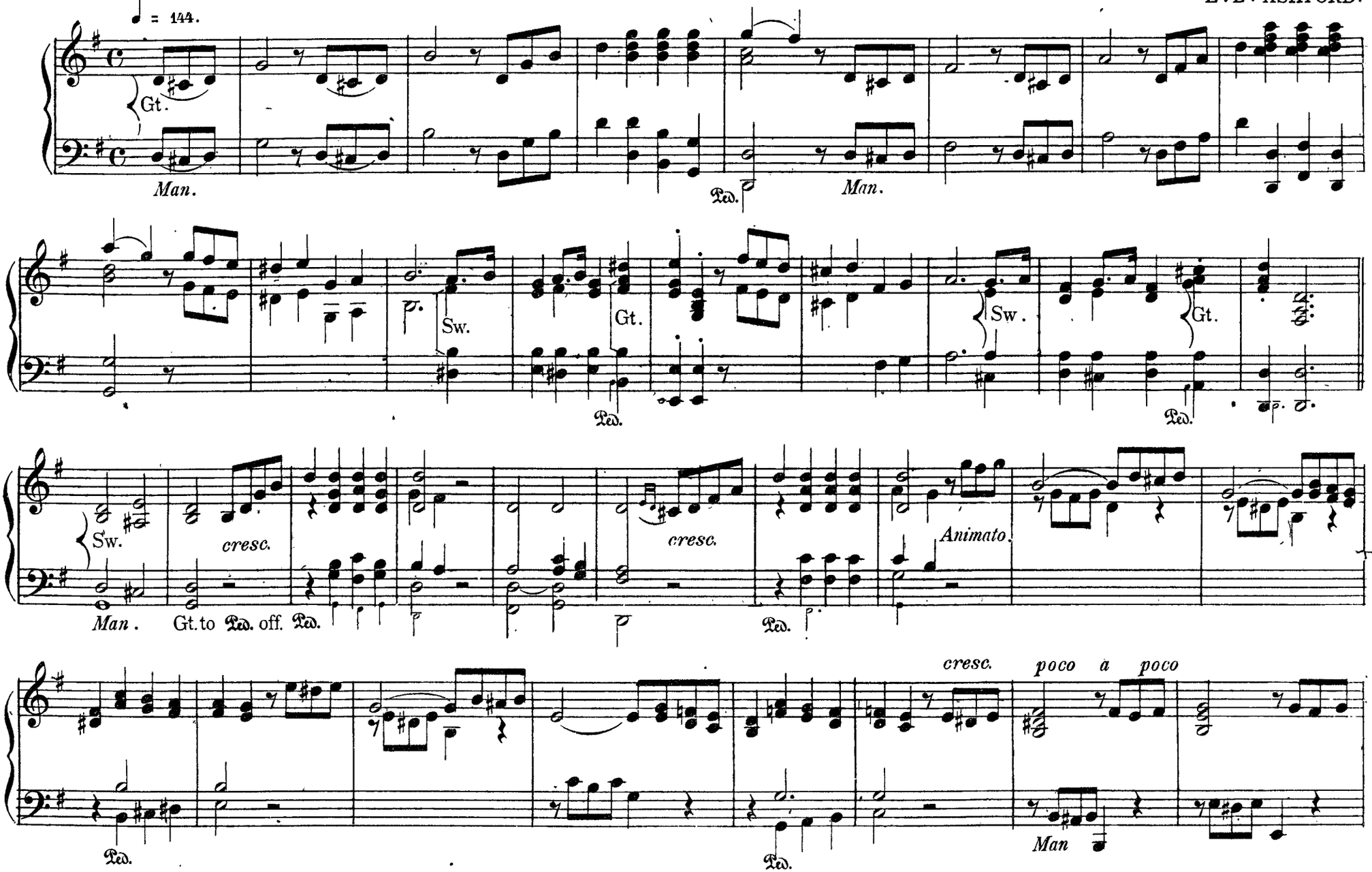
With an assured position in the musical world, with a steadily growing reputation as a composer of artistic church music, Mr. Schnecker can look forward to the score and more years of musical work before him with complacency and hopefulness, confident that it will be used and appreciated by a rapidly increasing circle of admirers.

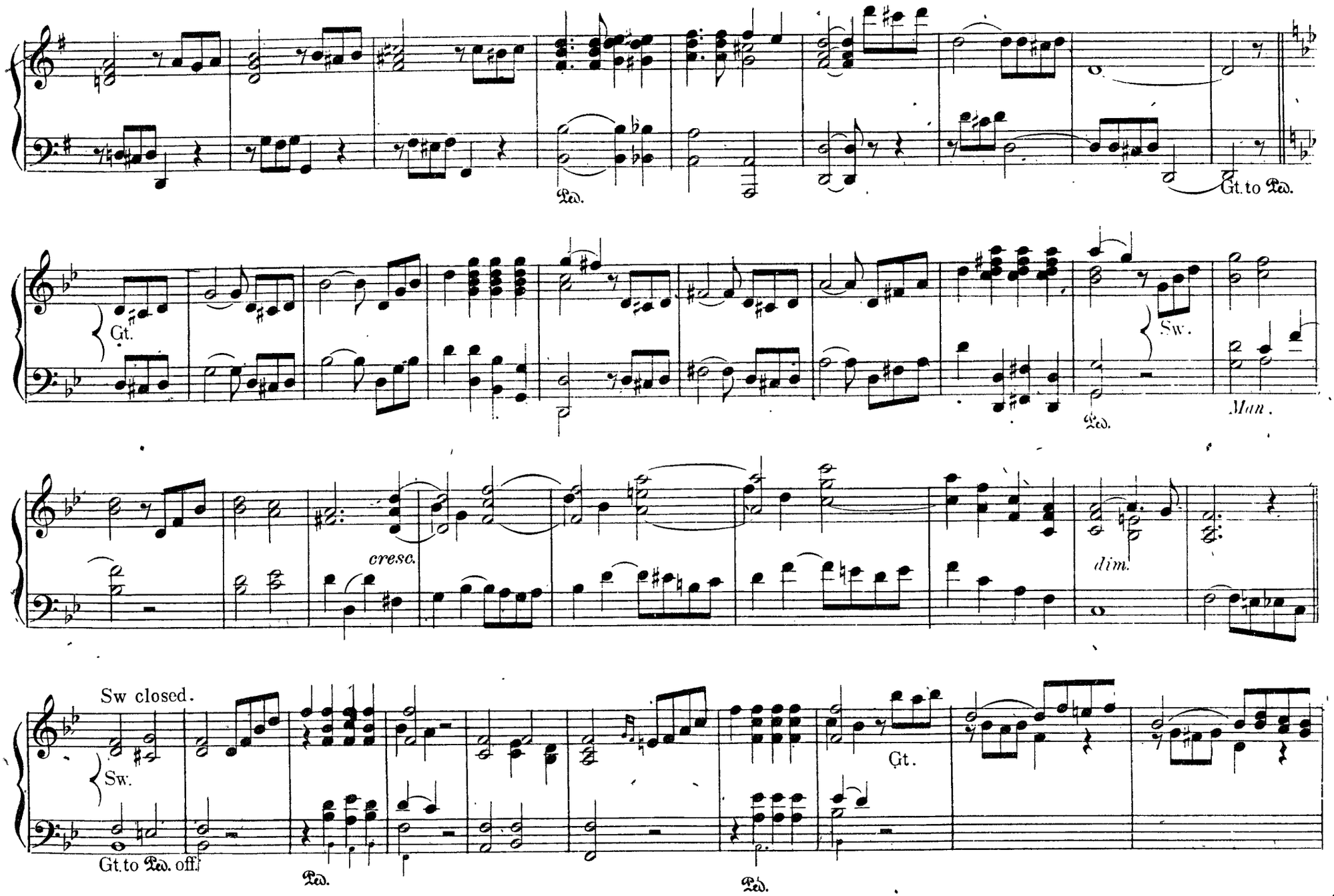
Gt. Full.
Sw. Full. coup. to Gt.
Ped. Op. Dia.
Gt. to Ped.

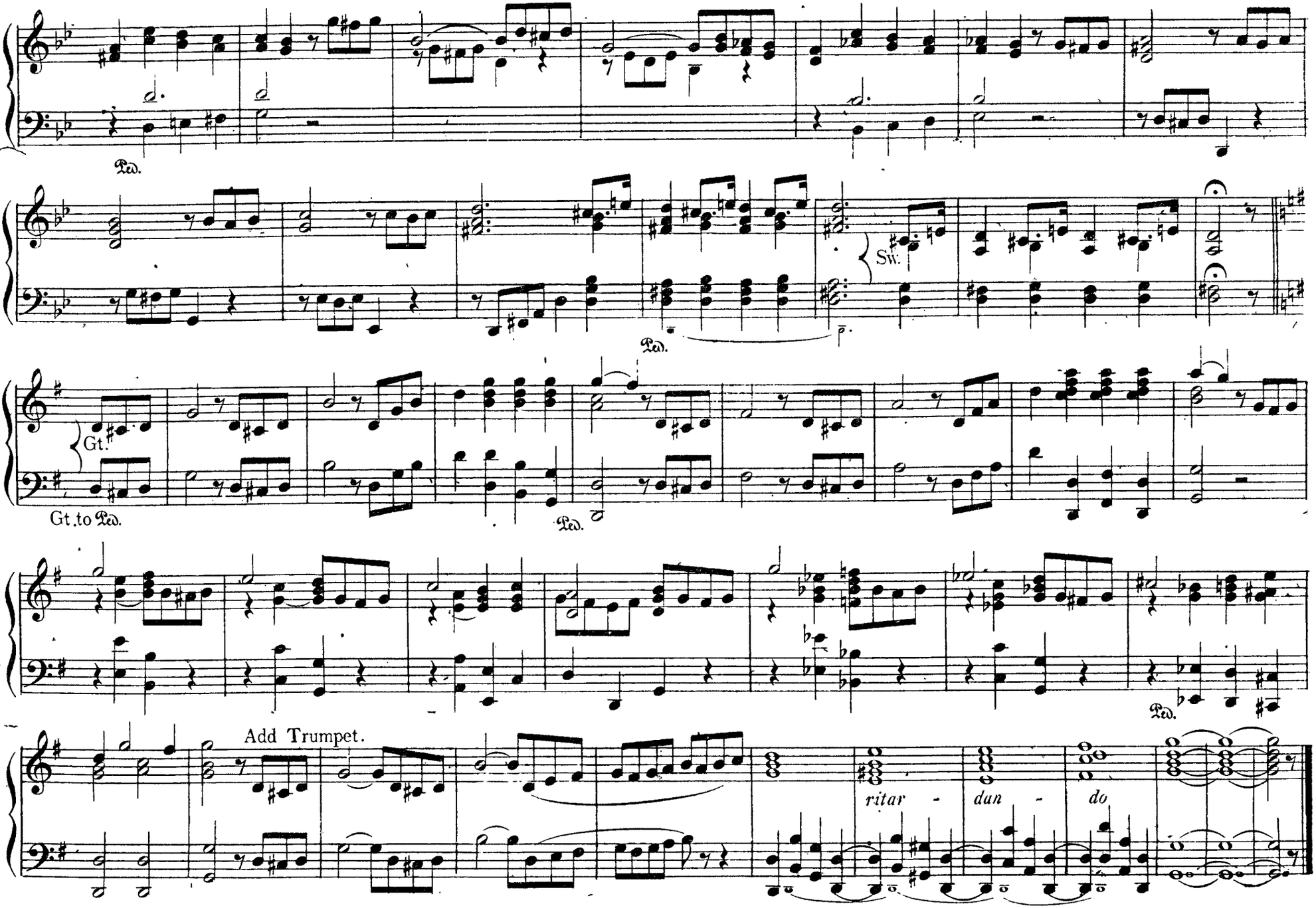
POSTLUDE.

FOR FESTIVAL OCCASIONS.

E. L. ASHFORD.




Ped.
Gt. to Ped.
Gt.
Sw.
Ped.
Man.
cresc.
dim.
Sw closed.
Sw.
Gt.
Gt. to Ped. off.
Ped.
Ped.

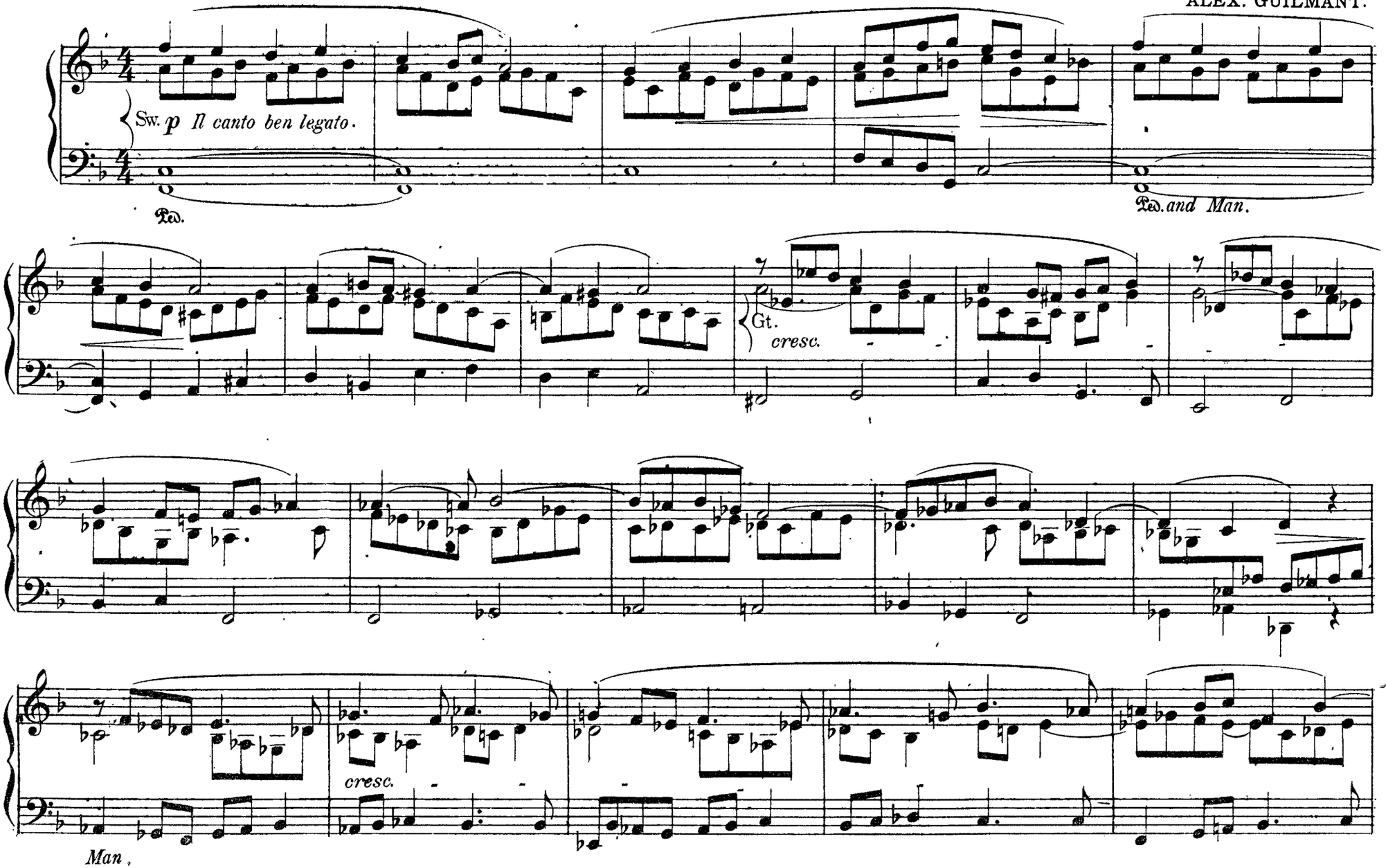

Ped.
Sw.
Gt.
Gt. to Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
Add Trumpet.
ritar - dun - do

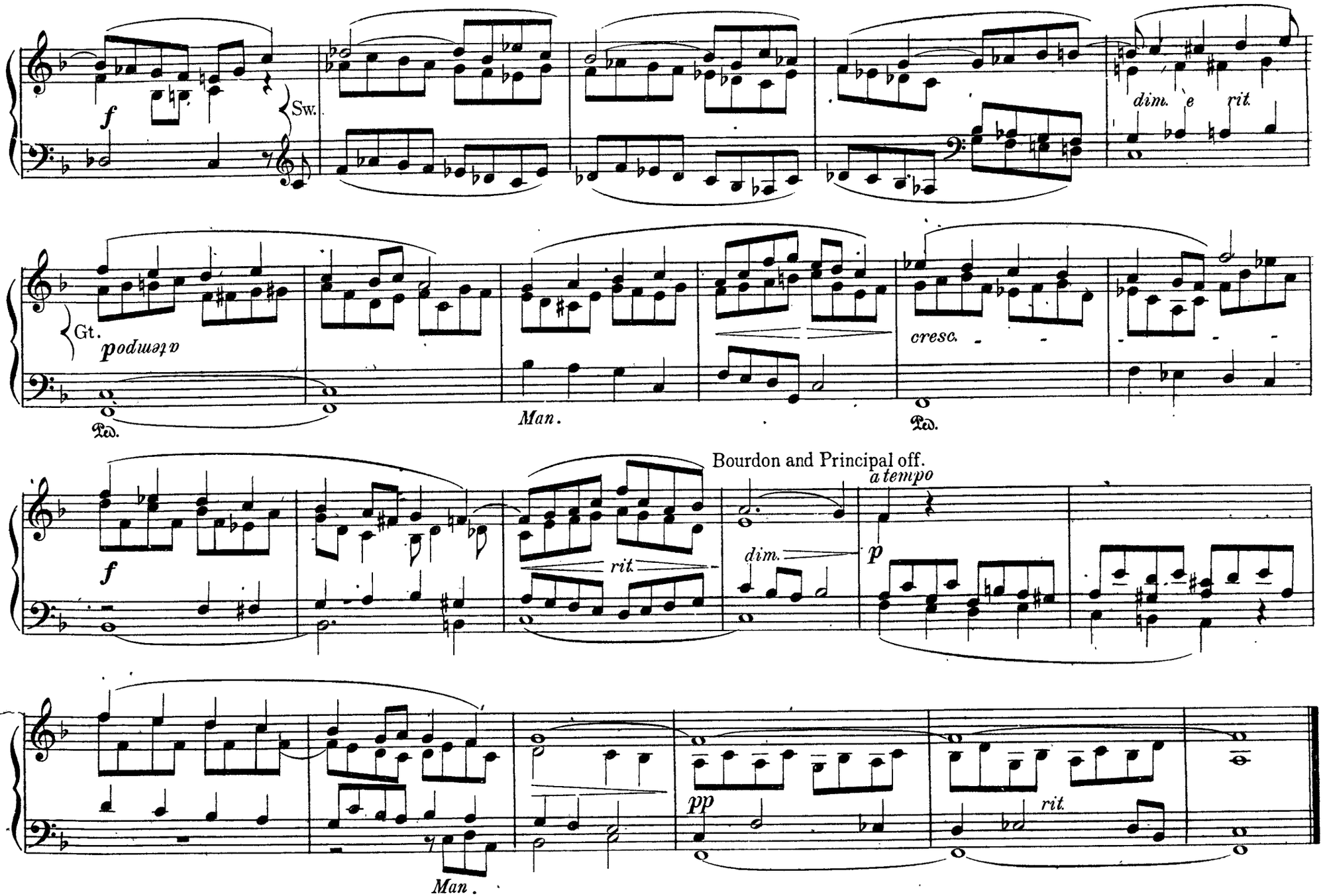
{Sw. Oboe and Flute coupled to Gt.
Gt. Bourdon Dopple Flute and Principal.
Ped. 16 ft Bourdon and Violincello

CANTABILE.

Andante ♩ = 76.

ALEX. GUILMANT.

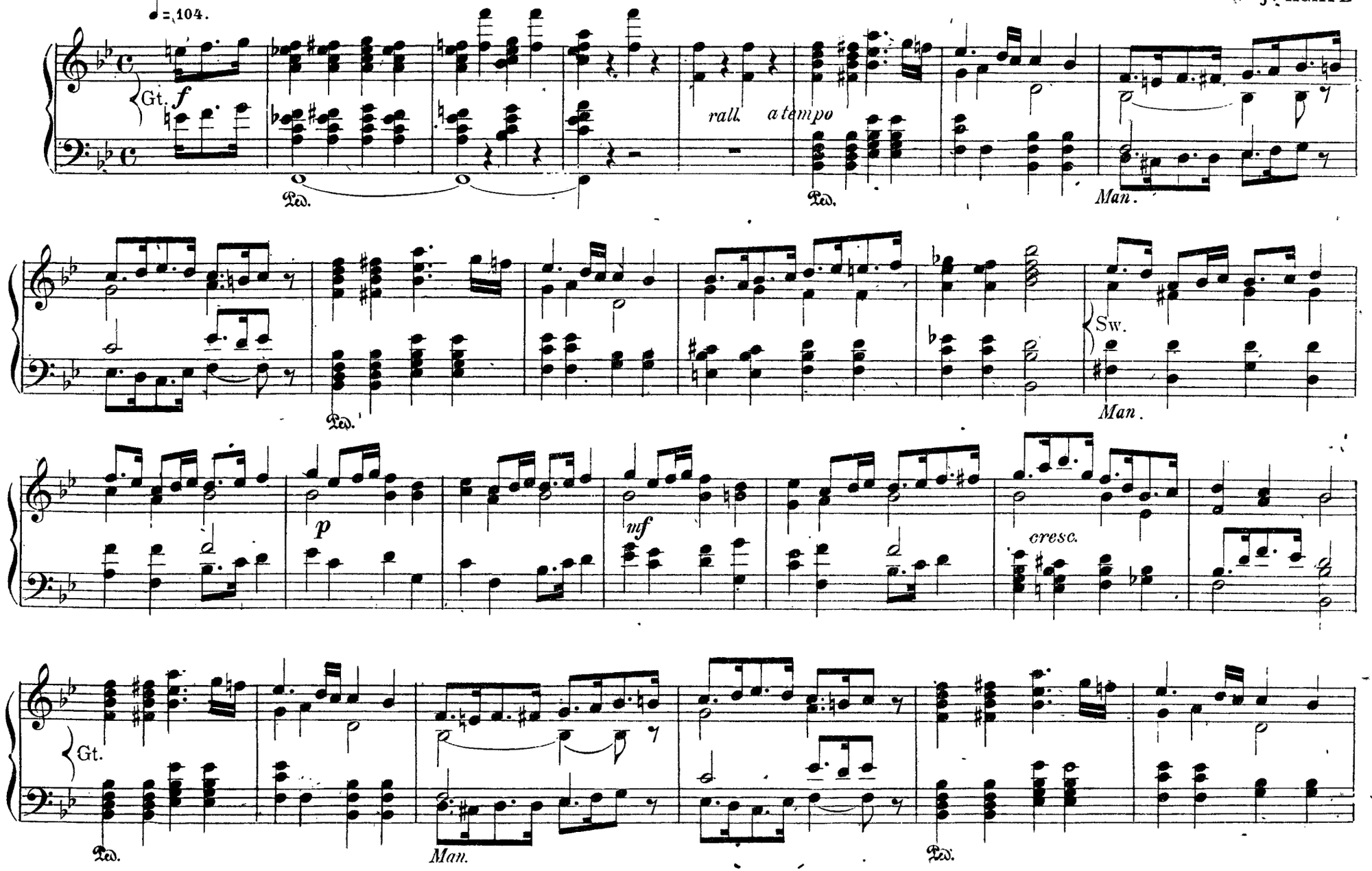


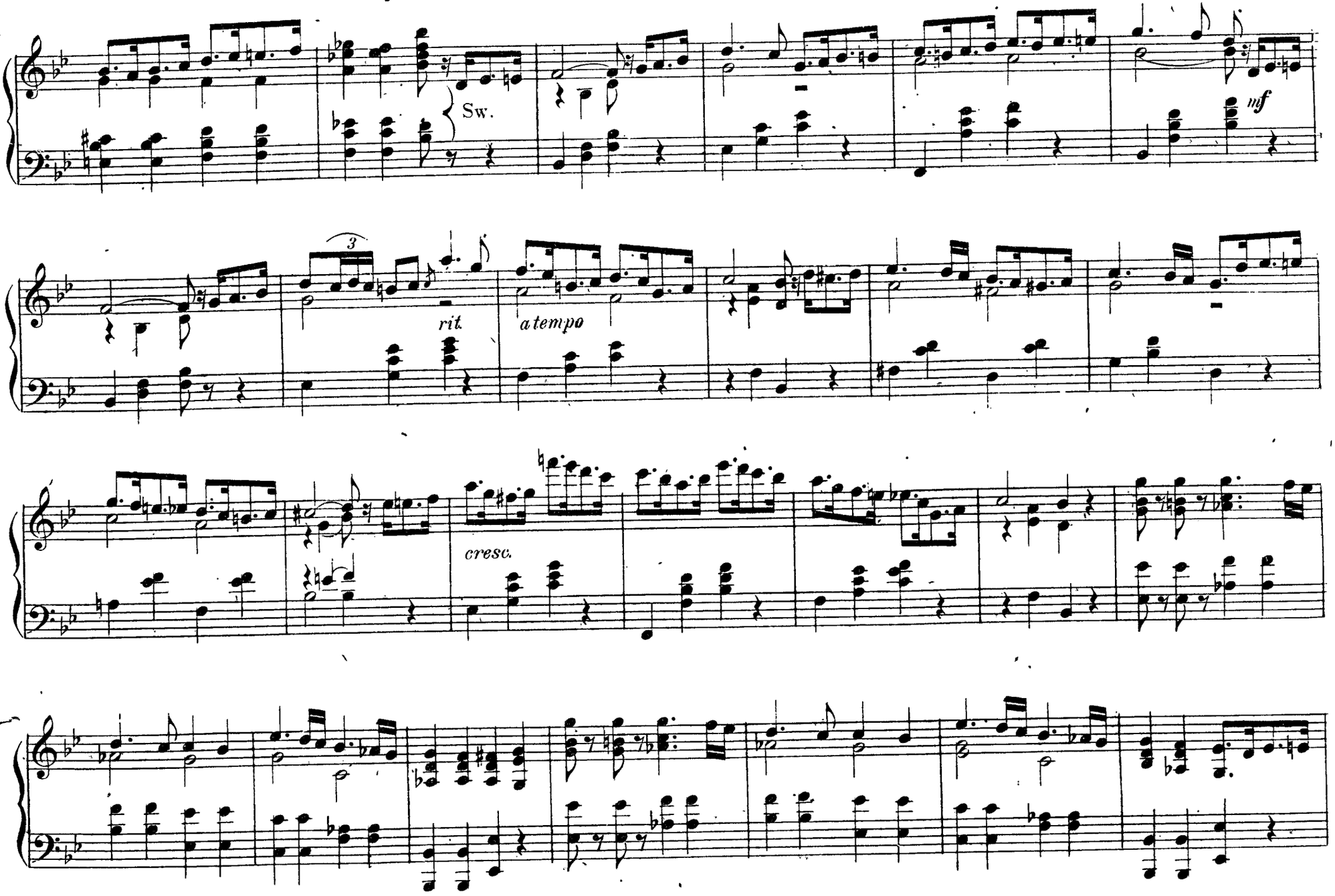

f
Sw.
dim. e rit.
Gt.
p a tempo
Ped.
Man.
cresc.
Ped.
f
rit.
Bourdon and Principal off.
dim.
a tempo
p
Man.
pp
rit.

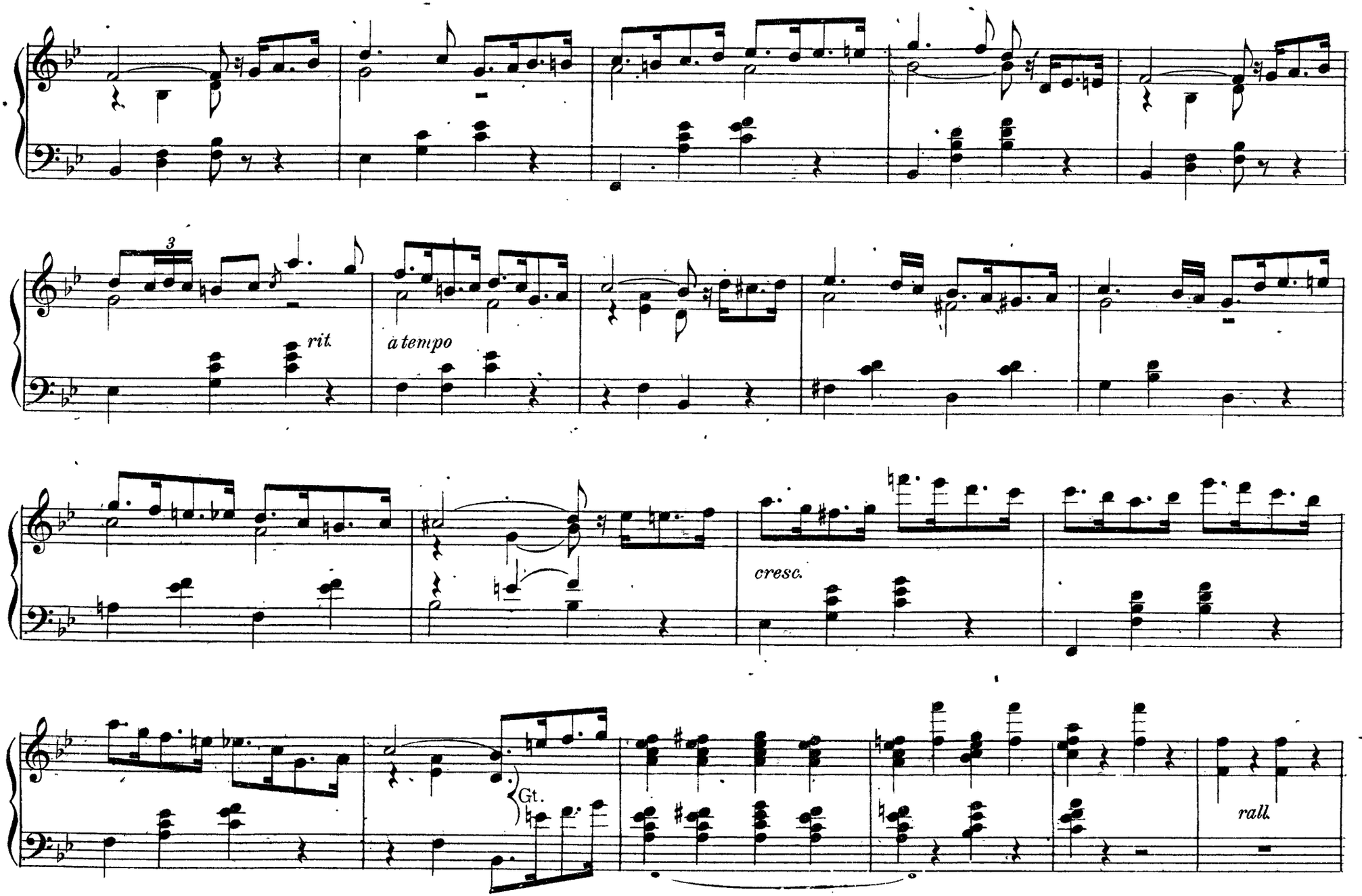
Gt. Full.
Sw. Full, coupled to Gt.
Ped. Bourdon coup. to Gt.

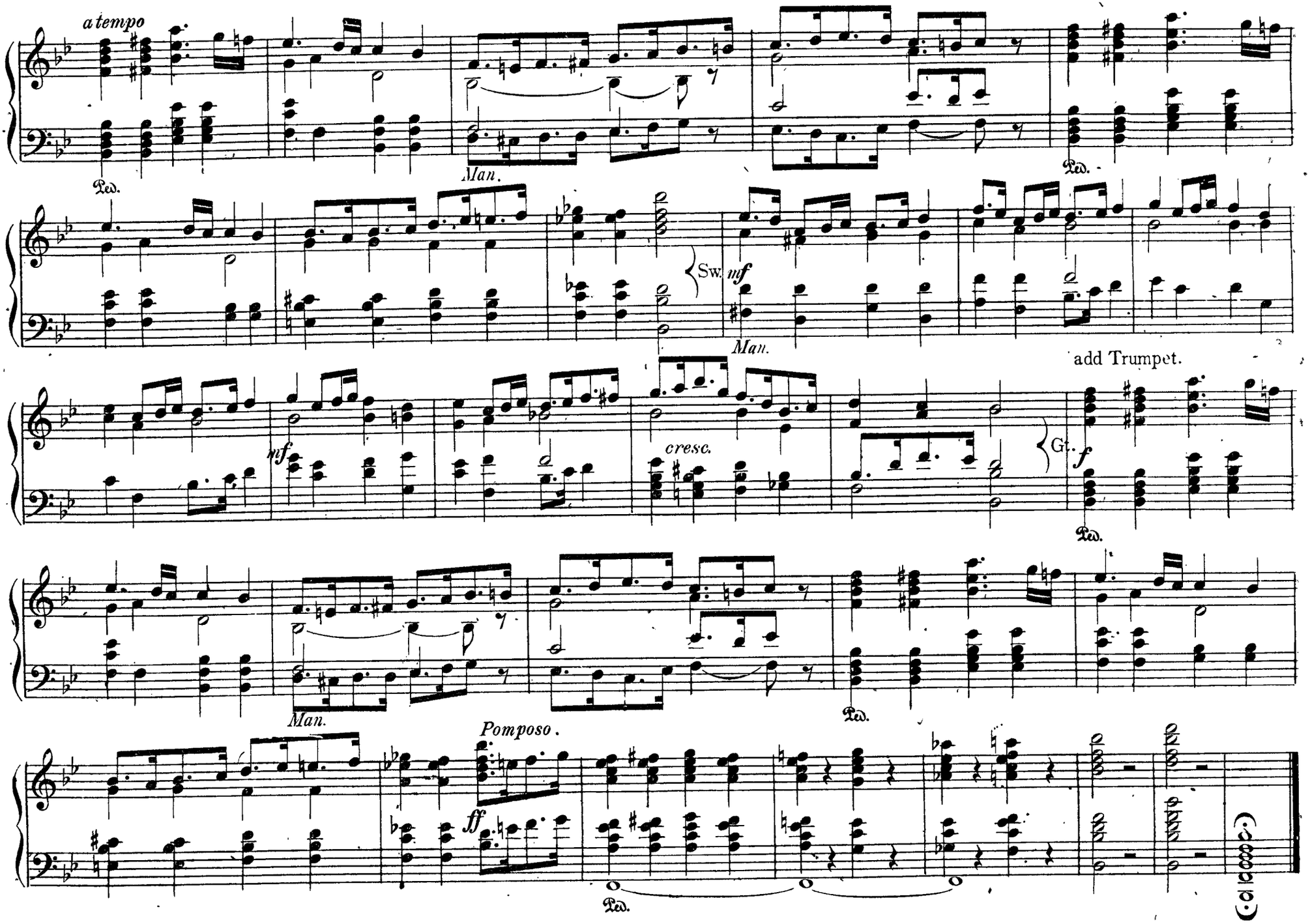
THE VICTOR'S RETURN.

W. J. AGATE.




Sw.
mf
3
rit.
a tempo
cresc.

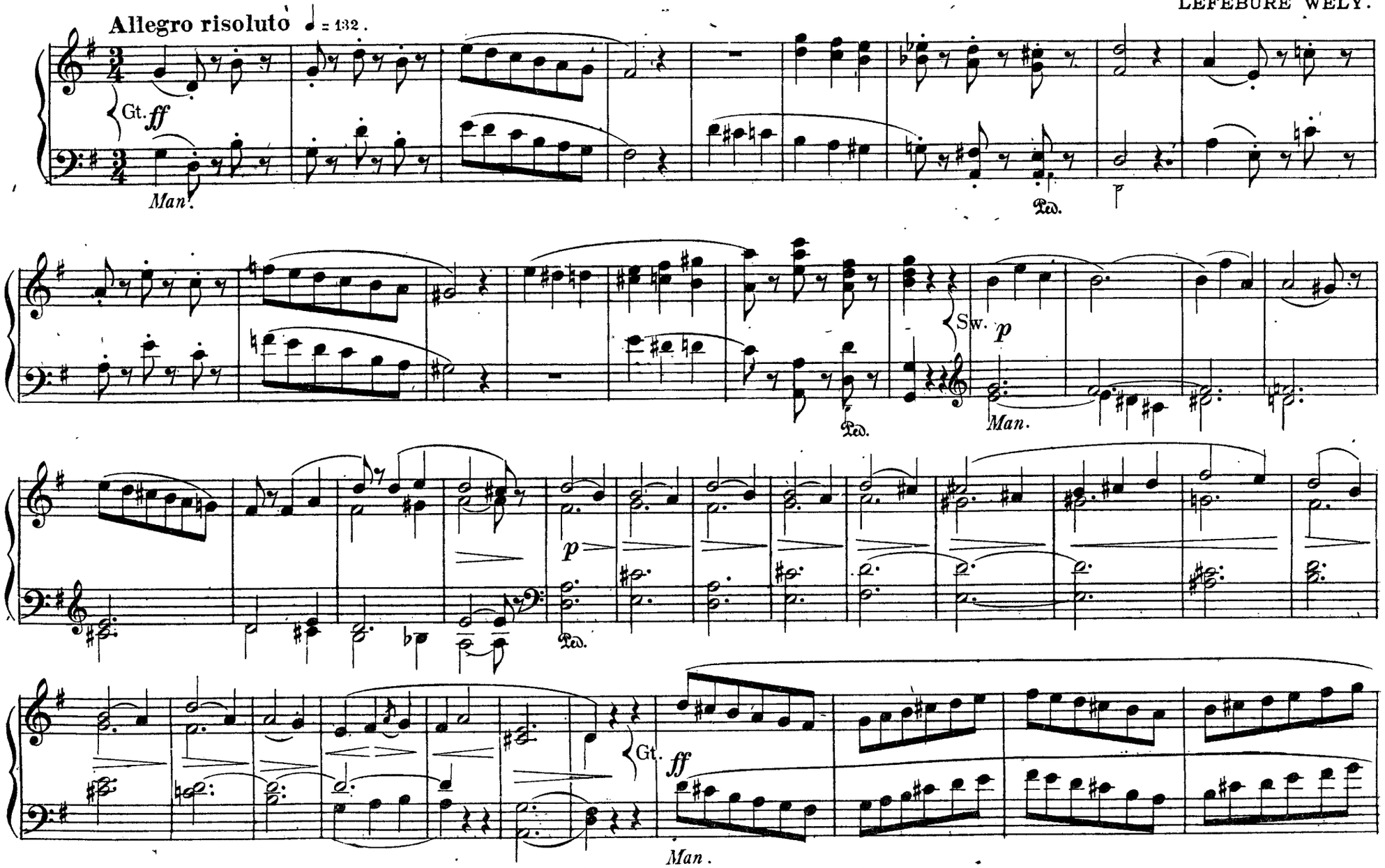

3
rit.
a tempo
cresc.
Gt.
rall.

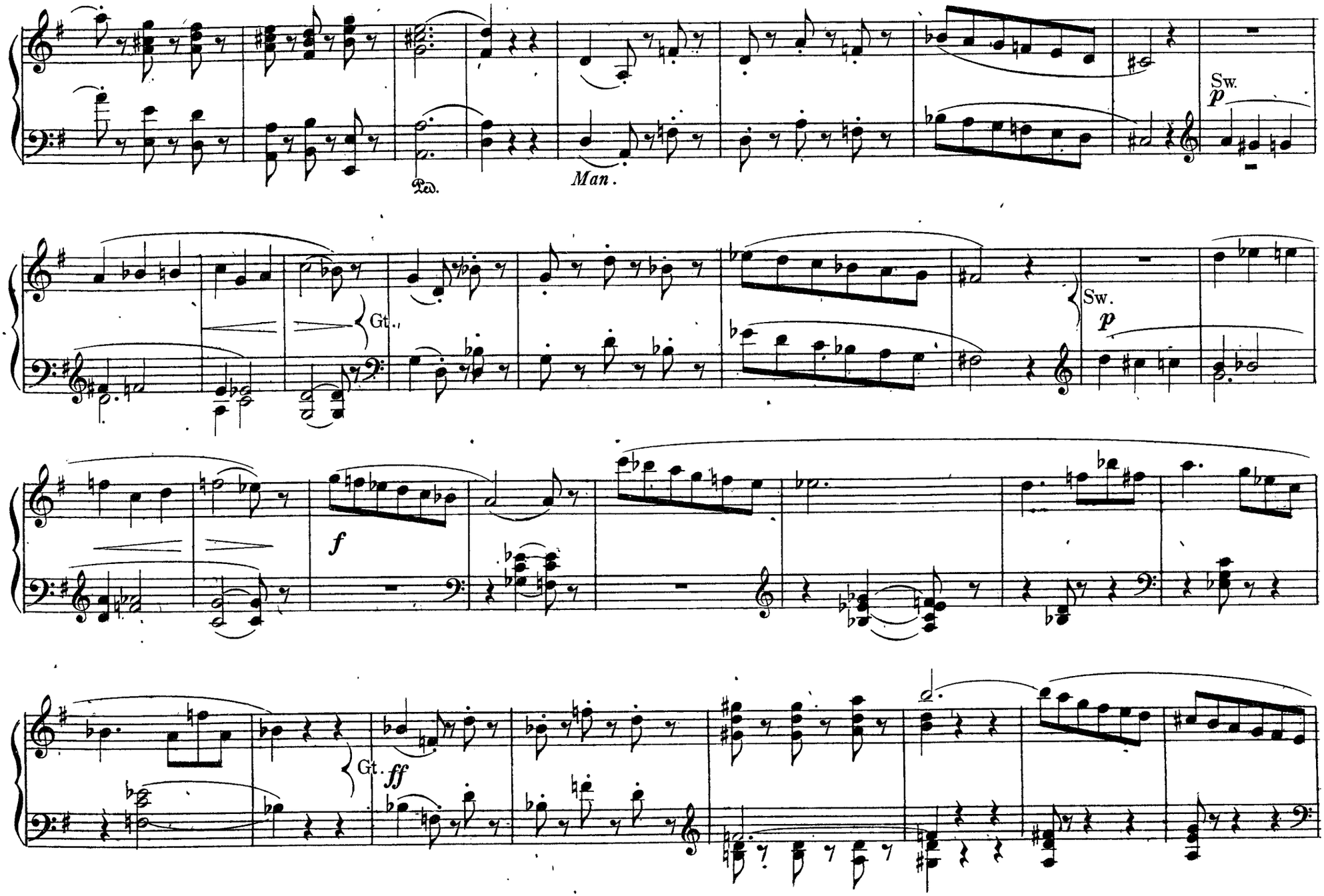

a tempo
Ped.
Man.
Ped.
Sw.
mf
Man.
add Trumpet.
mf
cresc.
Gt.
f
Ped.
Man.
Ped.
Pomposo.
ff
Ped.

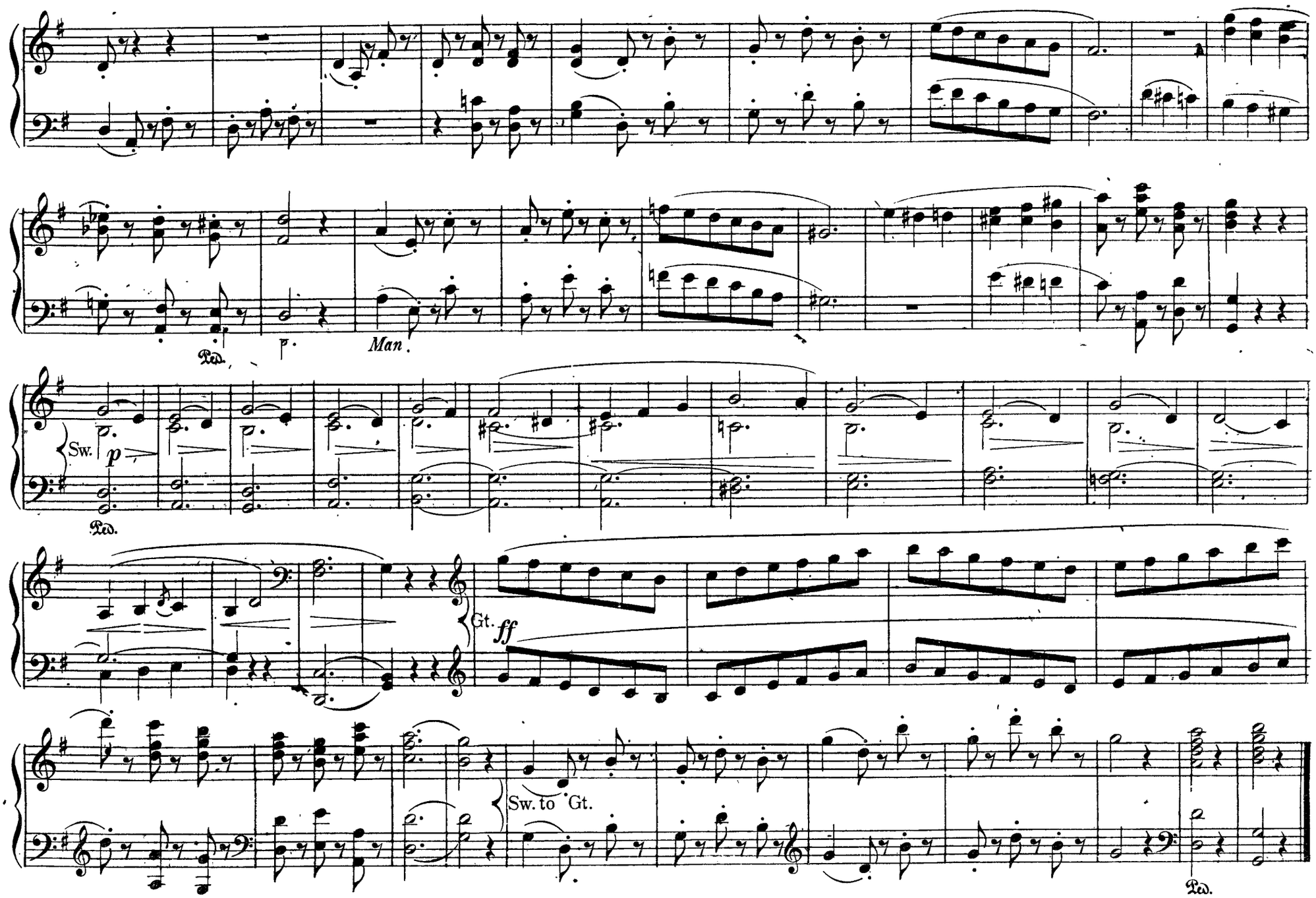
(Gt. Diapasons and Gamba.
Sw. Soft 8 and 4ft. stops,
Ped. Bourdon coupled to Swell.

OFFERTOIRE.

LEFÉBURE WÉLY.




Ped.
Man.
Sw.
p
Gt.
Sw.
p
f
Gt.
ff

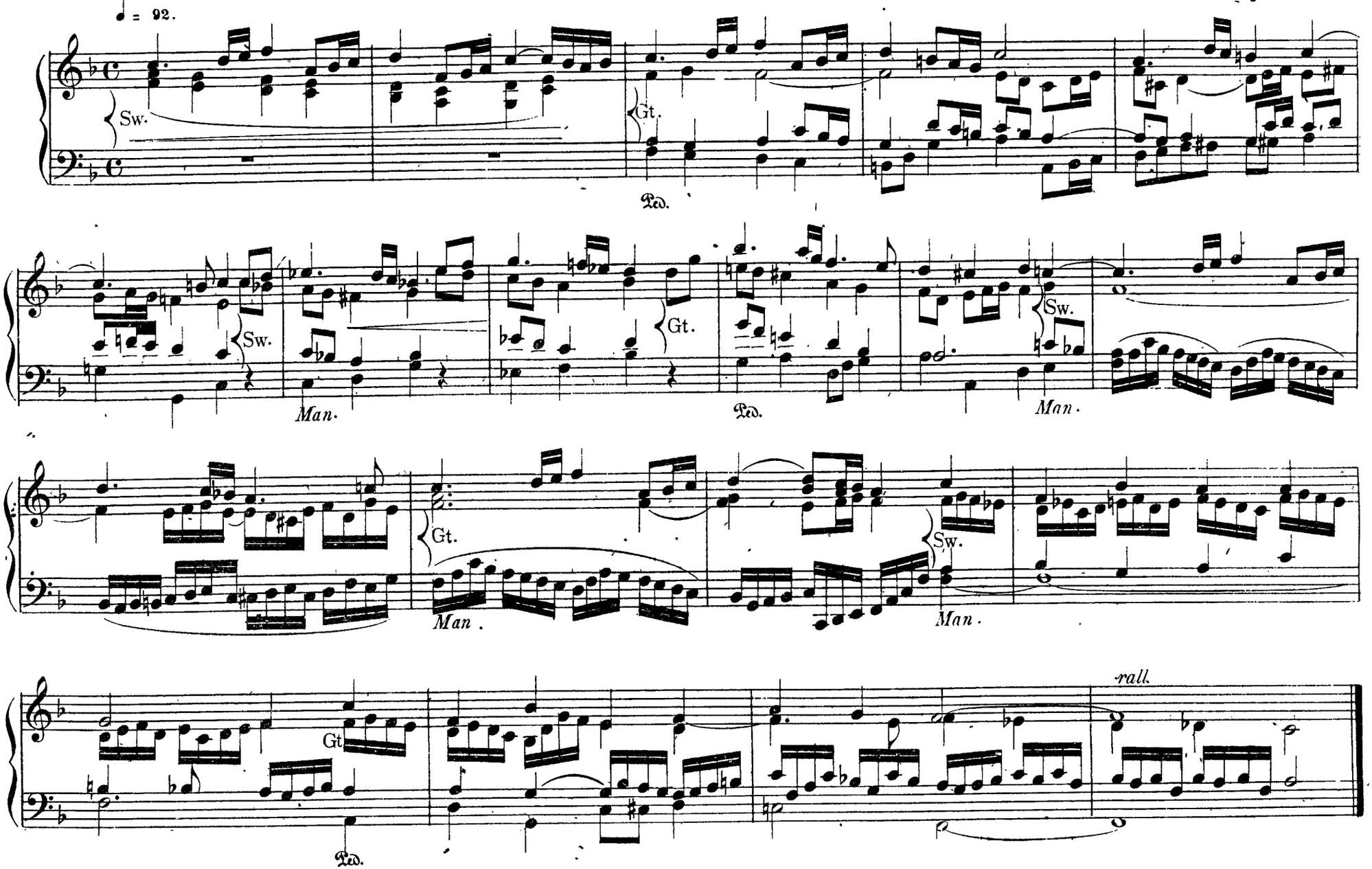

Ped.
p
Man.
Sw.
p
Ped.
Gt.
ff
Sw. to Gt.
Ped.

Gt. Melodia and St. Dia.
Sw. Salicional and Flute.
Ped. Soft 16 ft.

ADAGIO.

J. ANDRÉ.

♩ = 92.



Gt. Open Diapason.
Sw. Salicional, Dul. and Flute coup. to Gt.
Ped. Bourdon.

PASS ME NOT, O GENTLE SAVIOUR.

E. L. ASHFORD.

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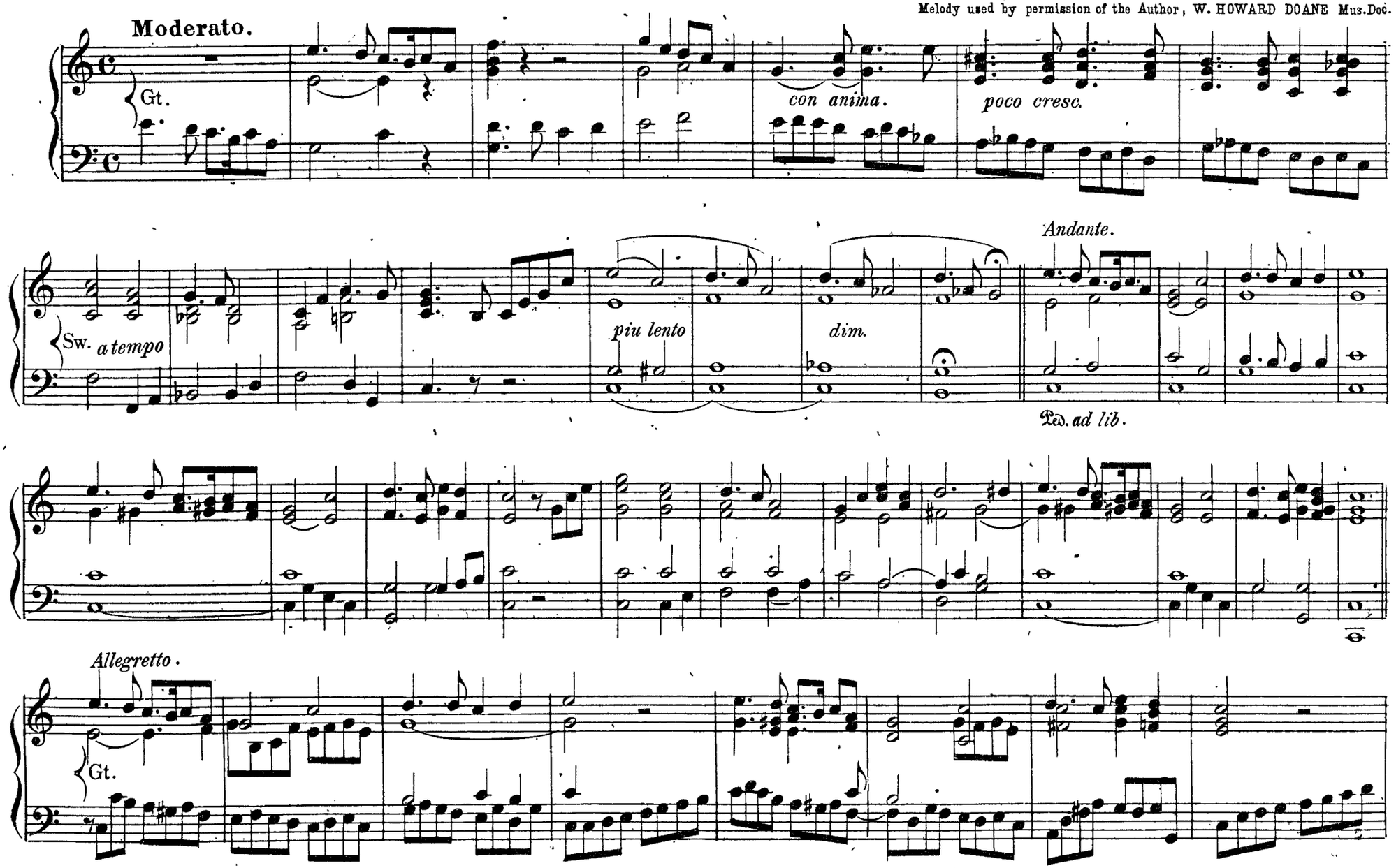
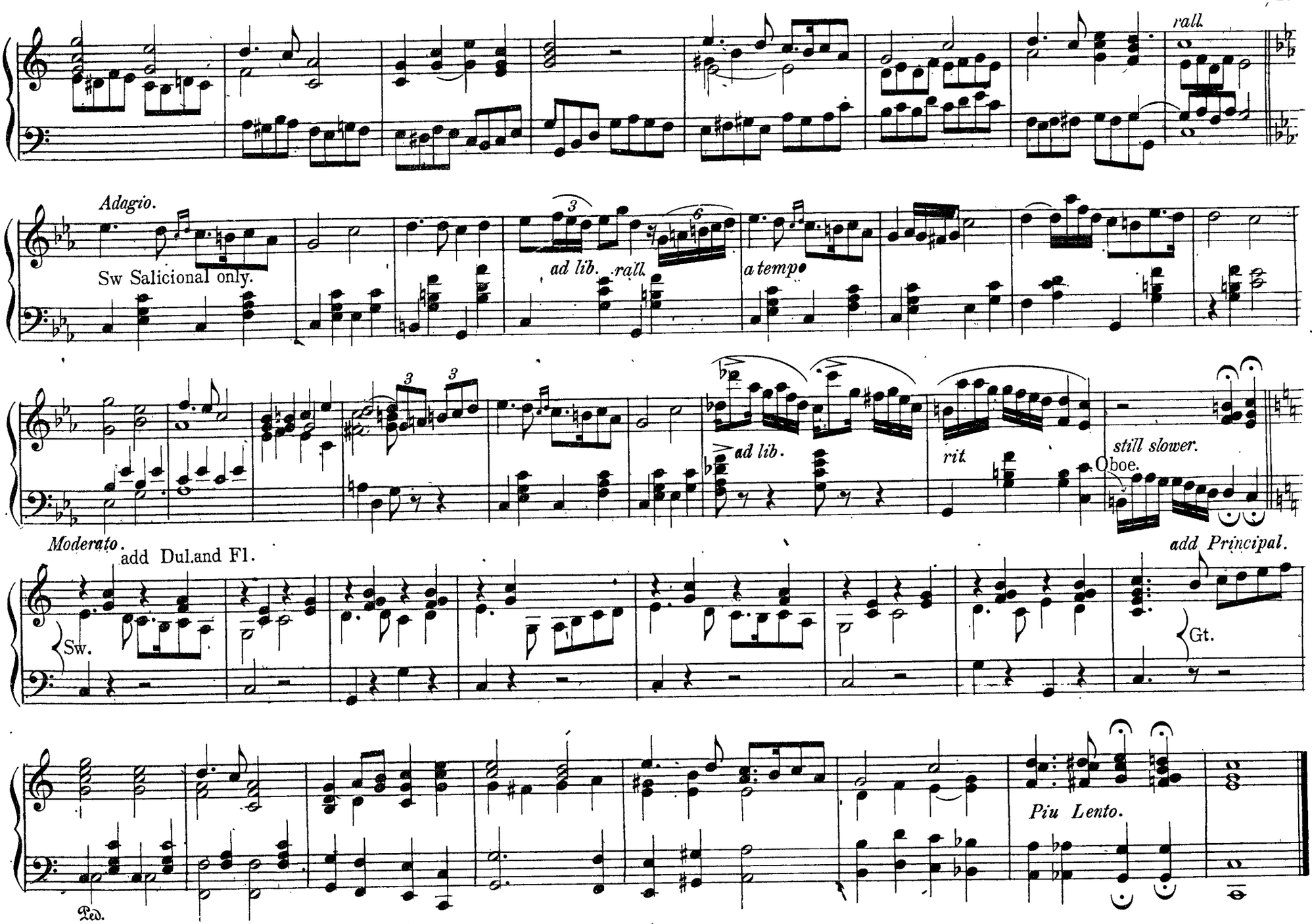
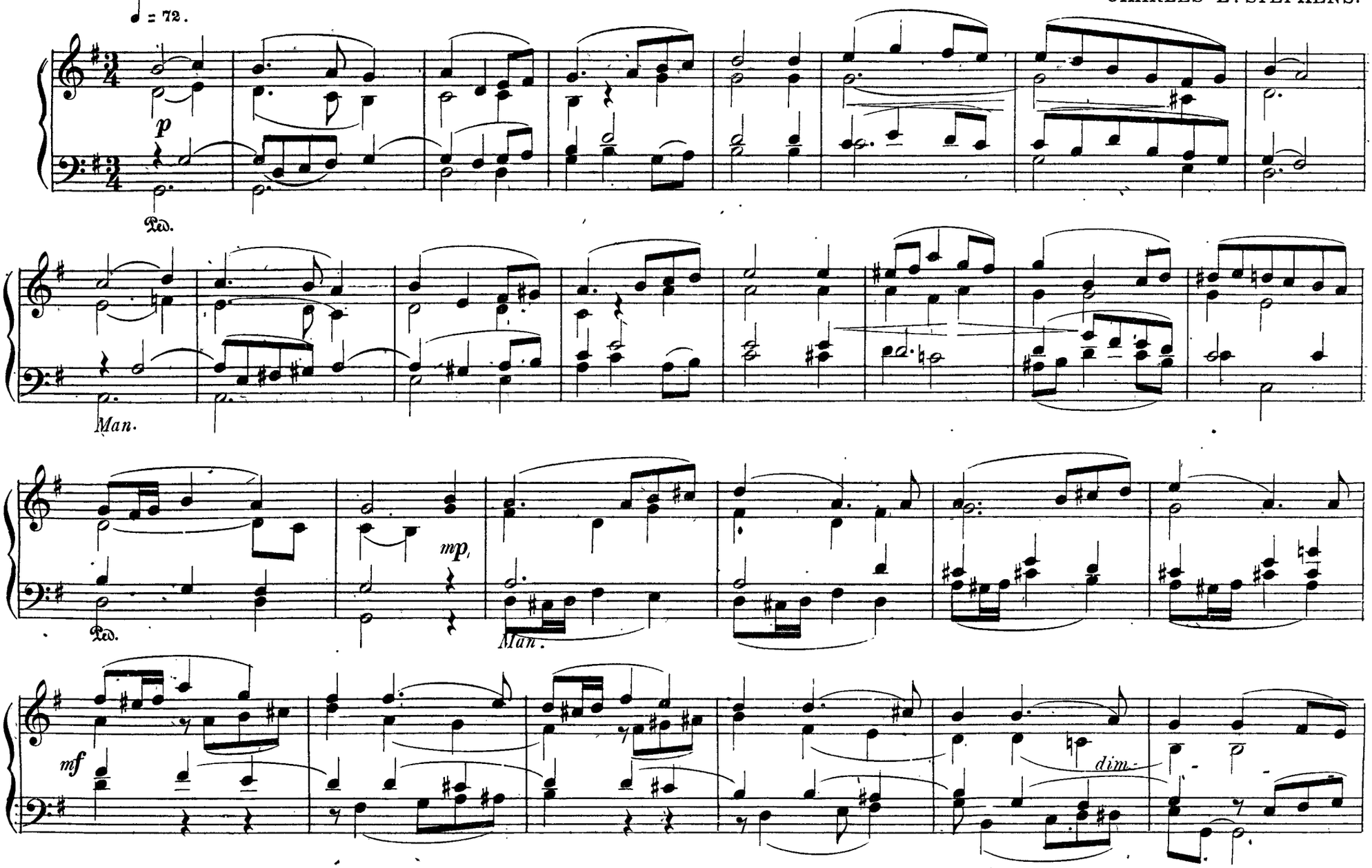


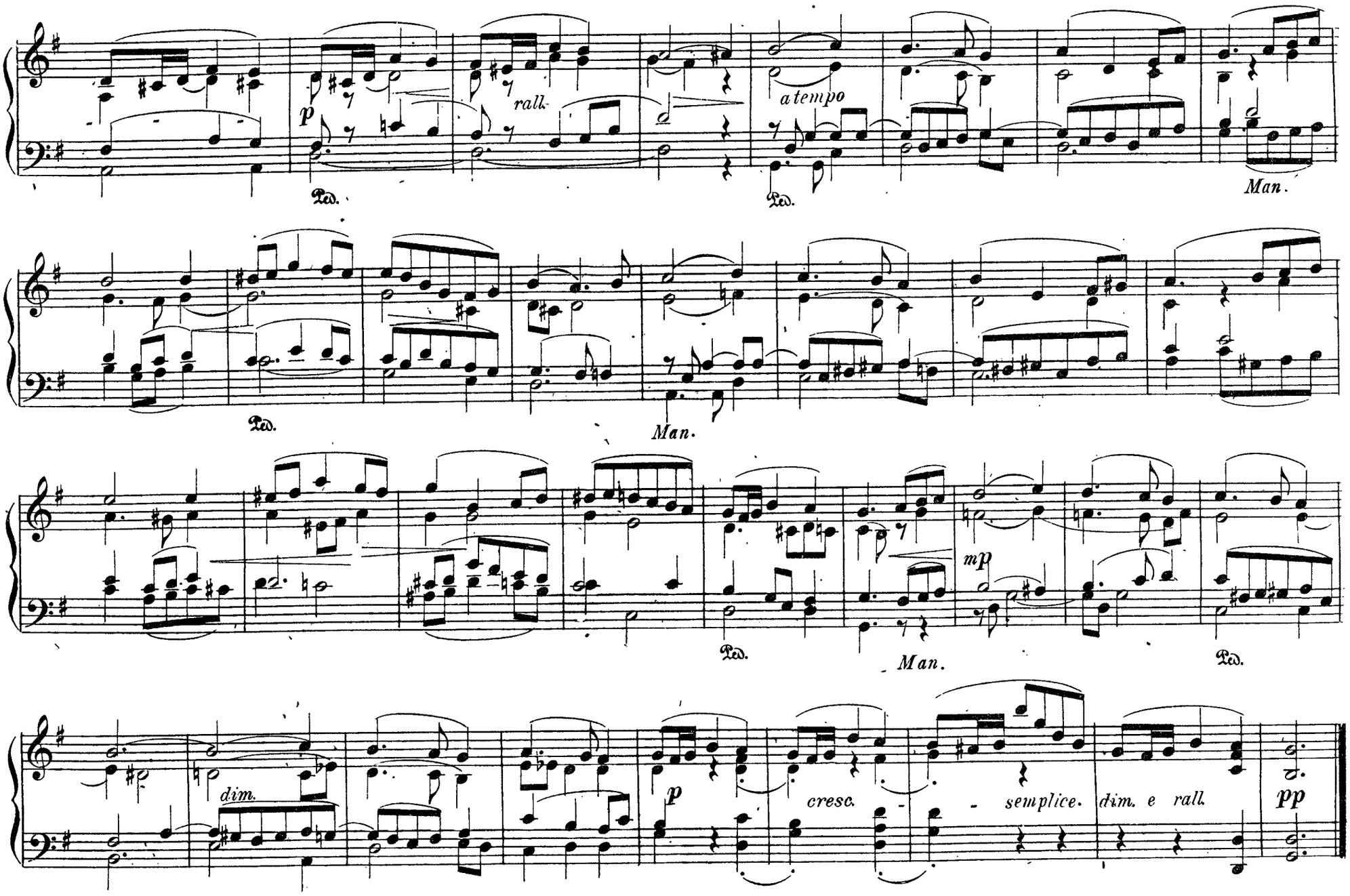

rall.
Adagio.
Sw Salicional only.
ad lib.
rall.
a tempo
ad lib.
rit
still slower.
Oboe.
Moderato.
add Dul.and Fl.
Sw.
add Principal.
Gt.
Piu Lento.
Ped.

Gt. Soft 8′ stops.
Ped. Bourdon.

ANDANTE.

CHARLES E. STEPHENS.



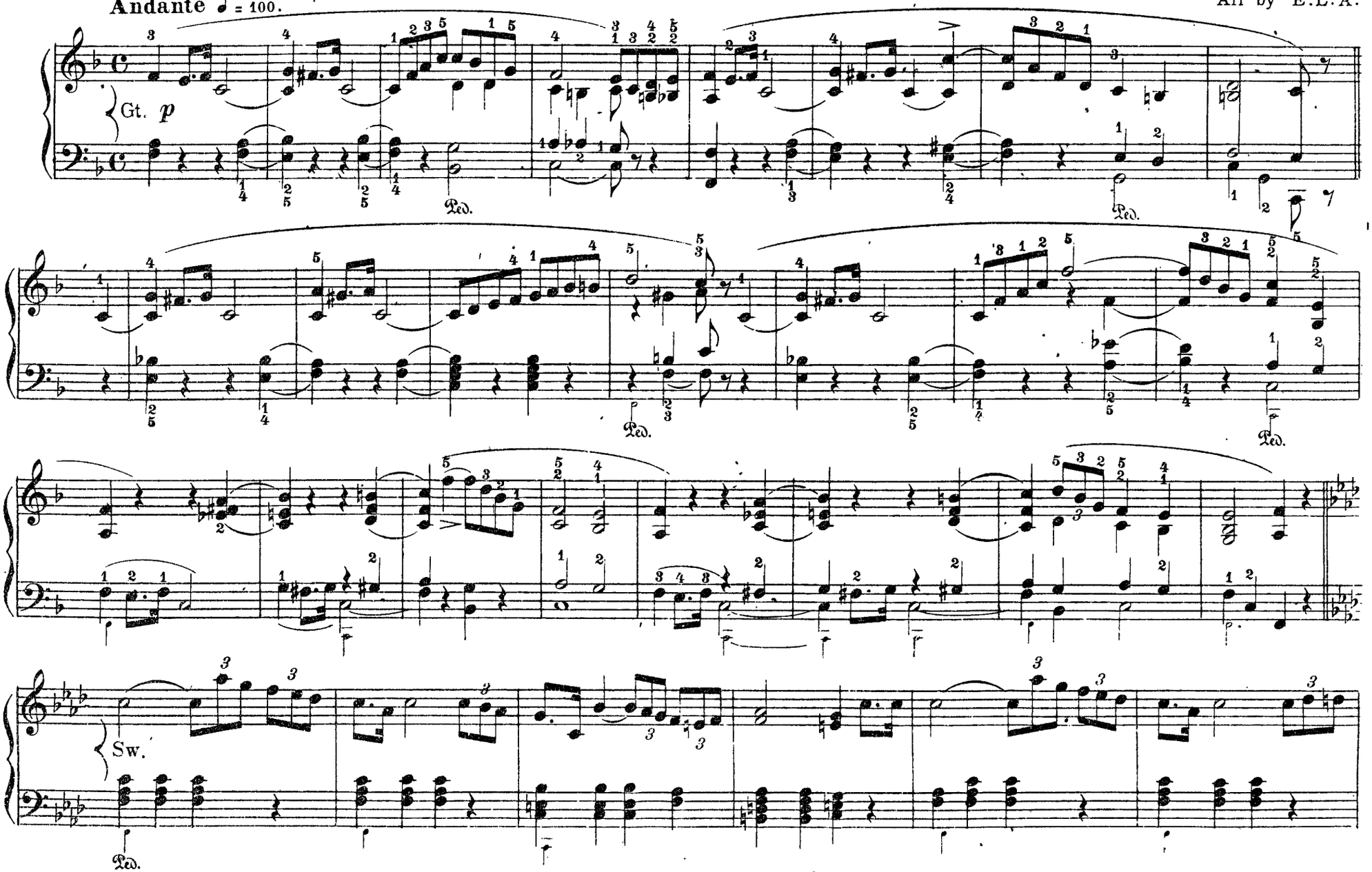

p
rall.
a tempo
Ped.
Man.
mp
dim.
cresc.
semplice.
dim. e rall.
pp

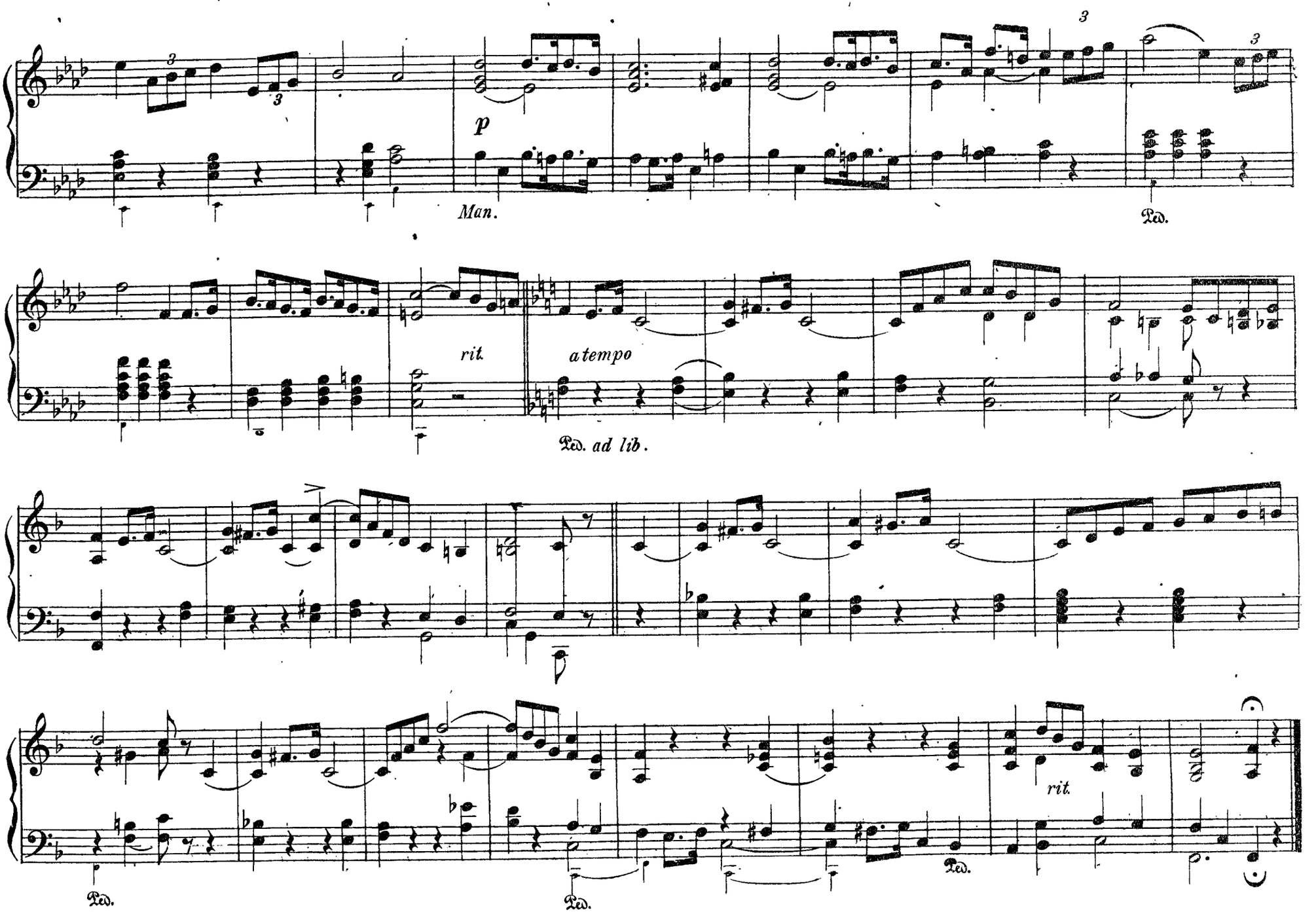
Gt. Melodia, St. Dia. Gamba, and Dopple Flute.
Sw. Clarabella, Flute, and Oboe.
Ped. 16 ft. Bourdon.

POSTLUDE.

Theme by Botier.
Arr by E.L.A.

Andante ♩ = 100.

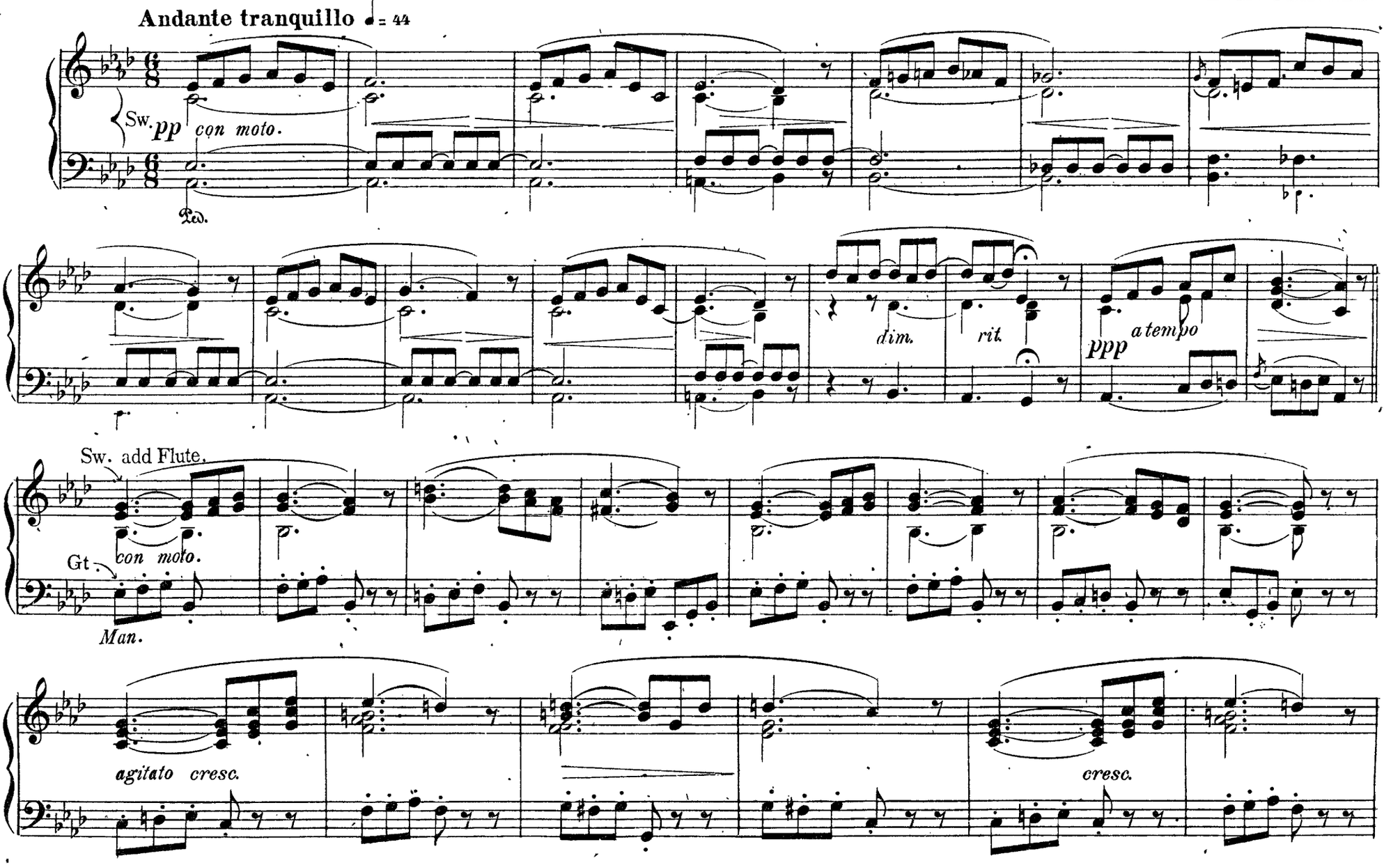


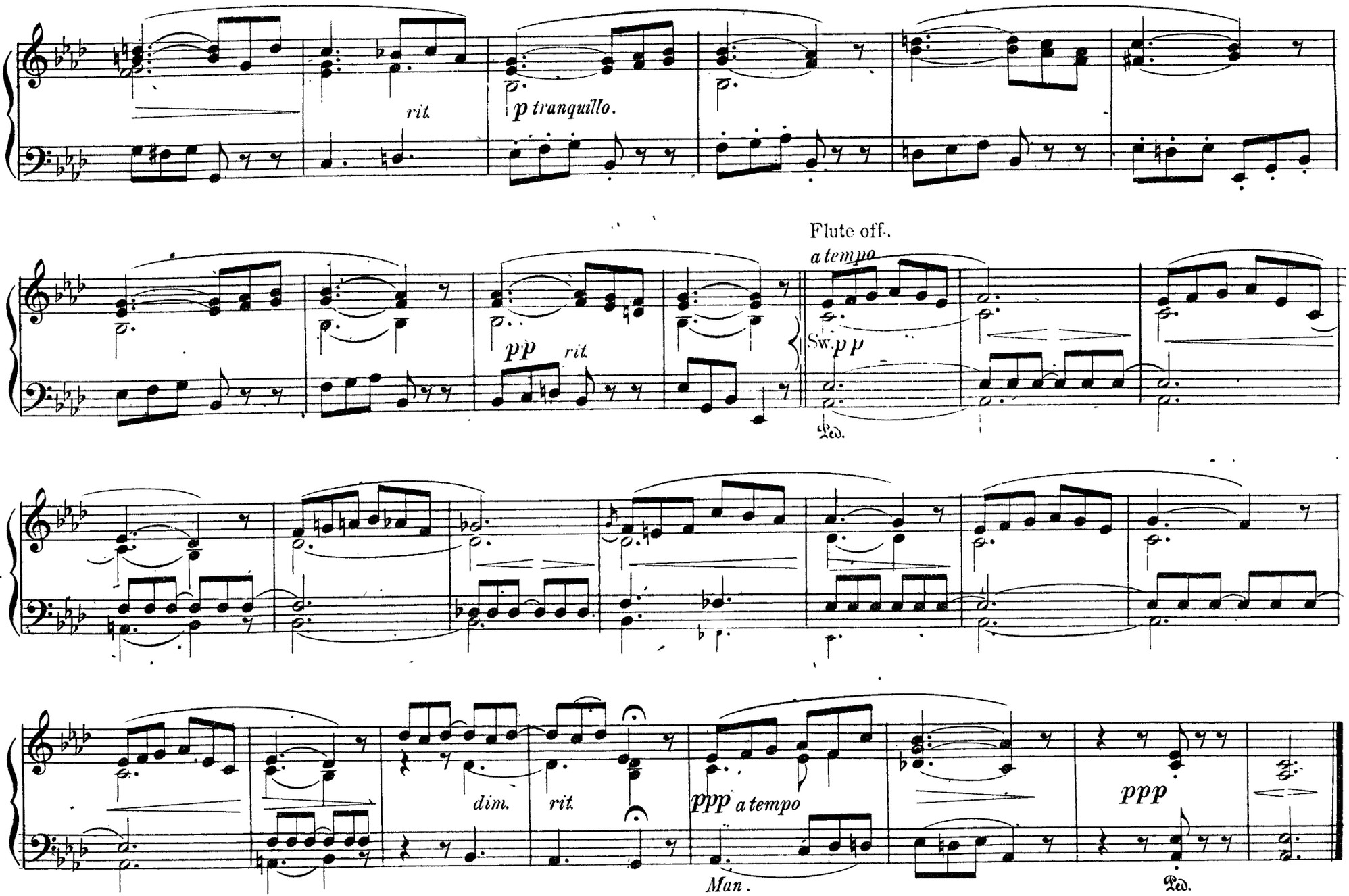

p
Man.
Ped.
rit.
a tempo
Ped. ad lib.
Ped.
Ped.
Ped.
rit.

Gt. Viol di Gamba.
Sw. Stopped Dia.
Ped. Bourdon.

DEVOTION.

E. M. FLAVELL.

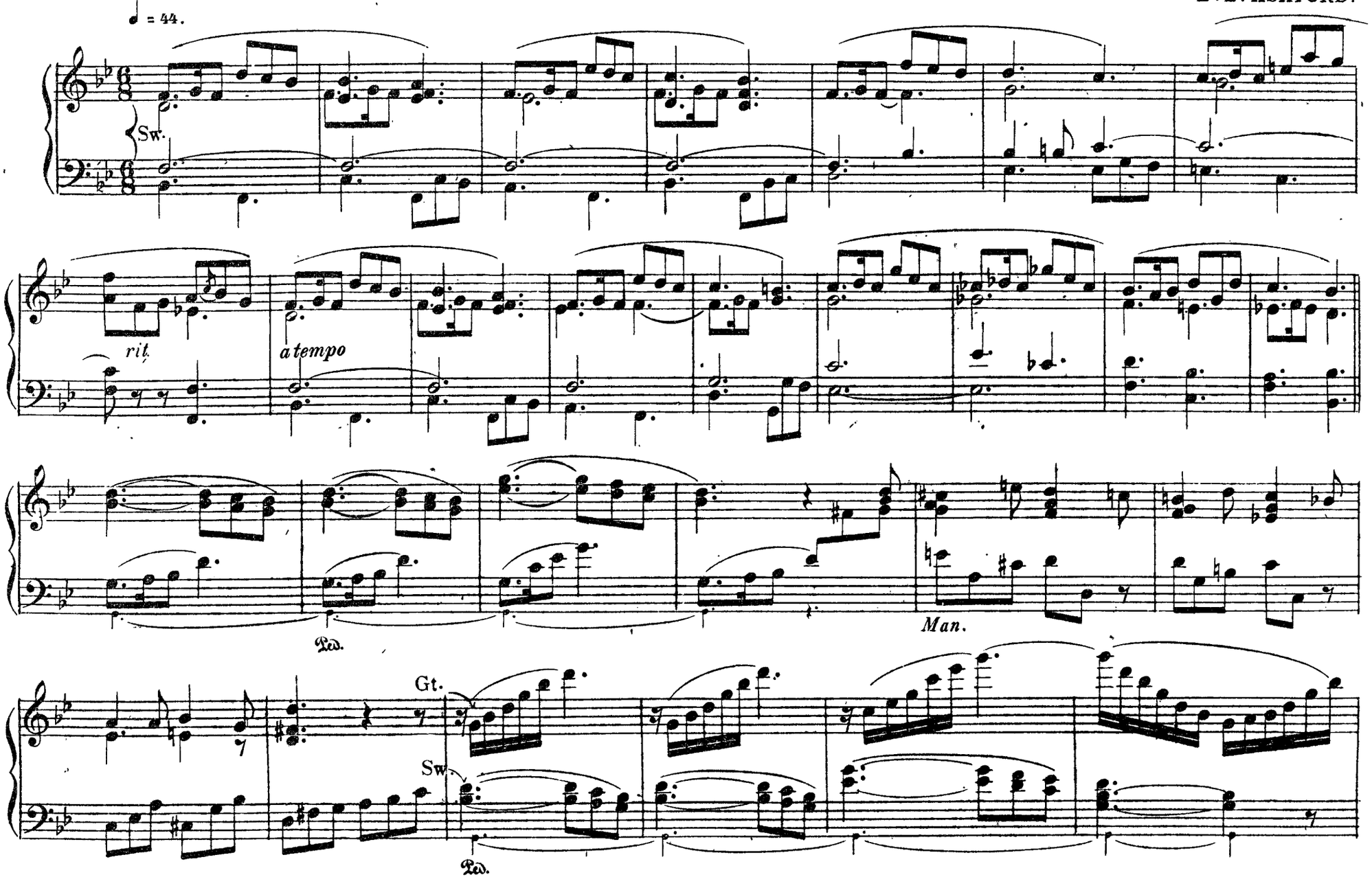


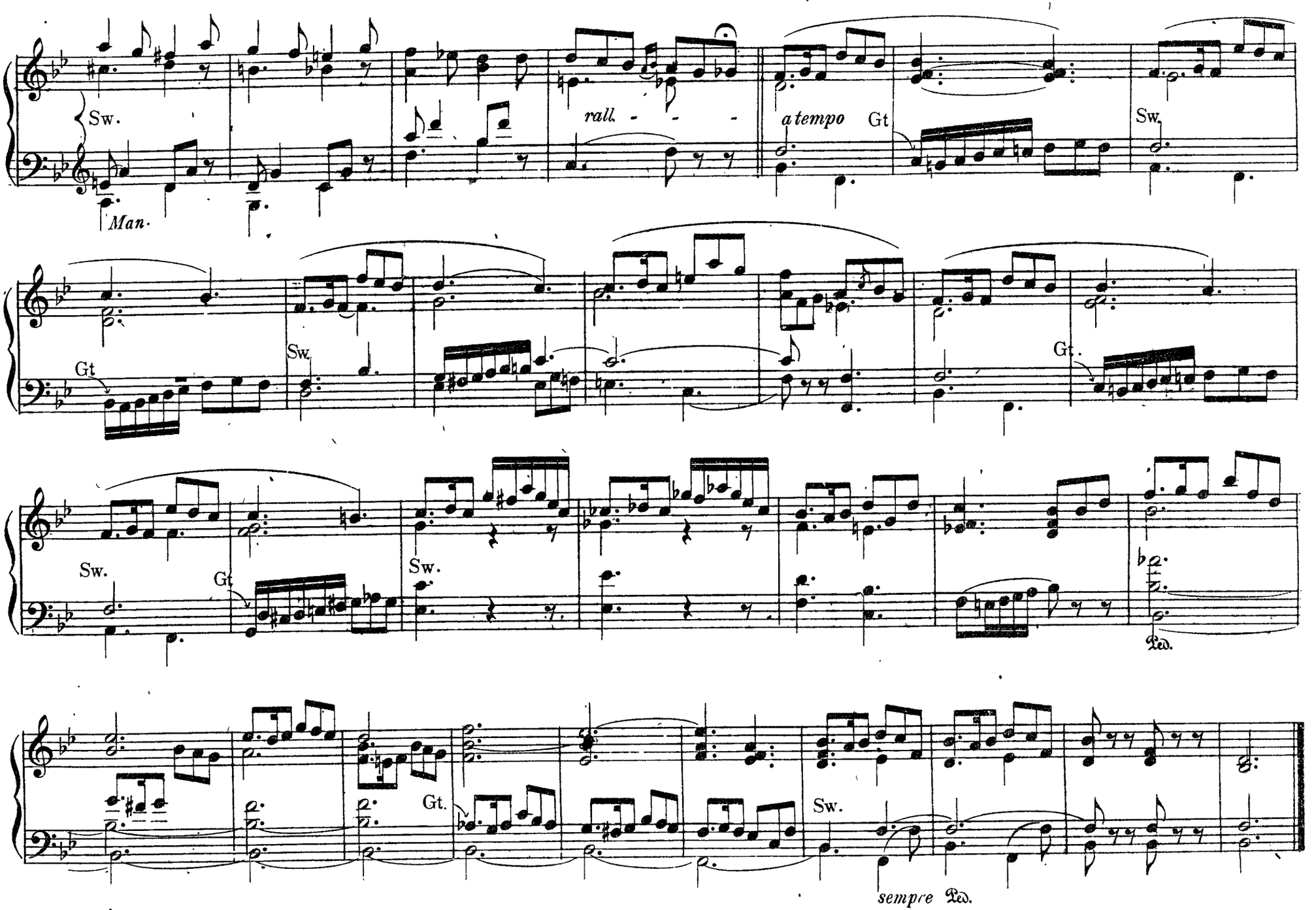

rit.
p tranquillo.
Flute off.
a tempo
pp
rit.
Sw. pp
Ped.
dim.
rit.
ppp a tempo
Man.
ppp
Ped.

Gt. Dopple Flute.
Sw. Aeolina Stopped Dia. and Flute.
Ped. Bourdon.

SUNSET GLOW.

E. L. ASHFORD.




Sw.
Man.
rall. - - -
a tempo
Gt
Sw.
Gt
Sw.
Gt.
Sw.
Gt
Sw.
Ped.
Gt.
Sw.
sempre Ped.

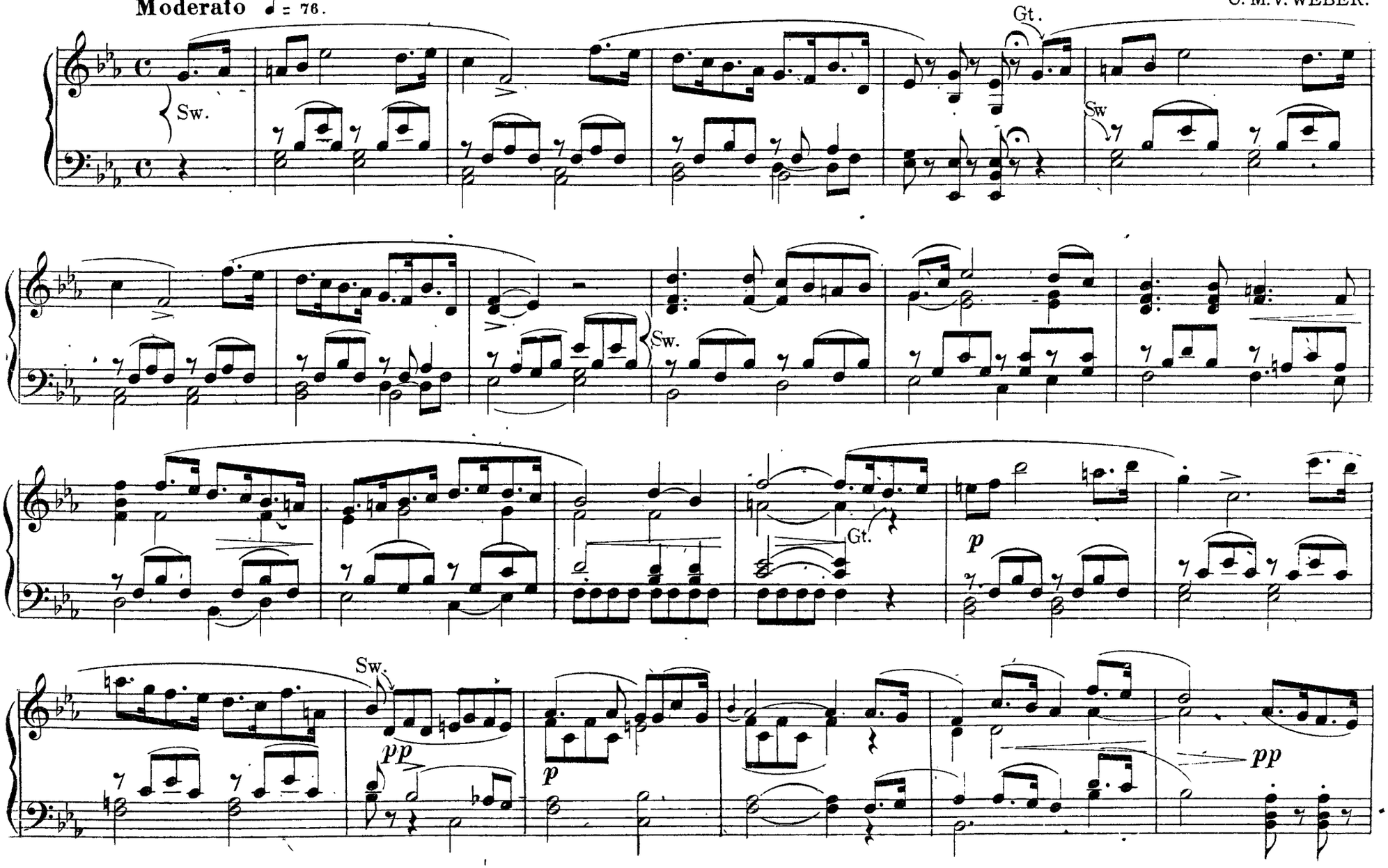
Gt. Clarionet or Gamba.
Sw. Soft 8ft stops and Flute.
Ped. Bourdon.

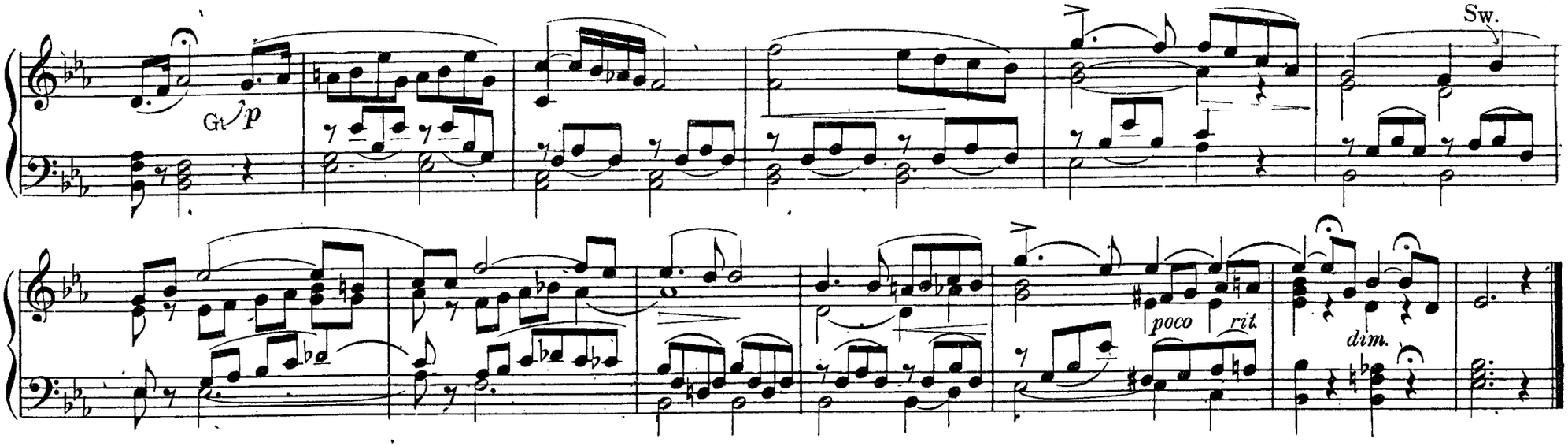
THROUGH THE FOREST.

"Freischütz."

C. M. v. WEBER.

Moderato ♩ = 76.



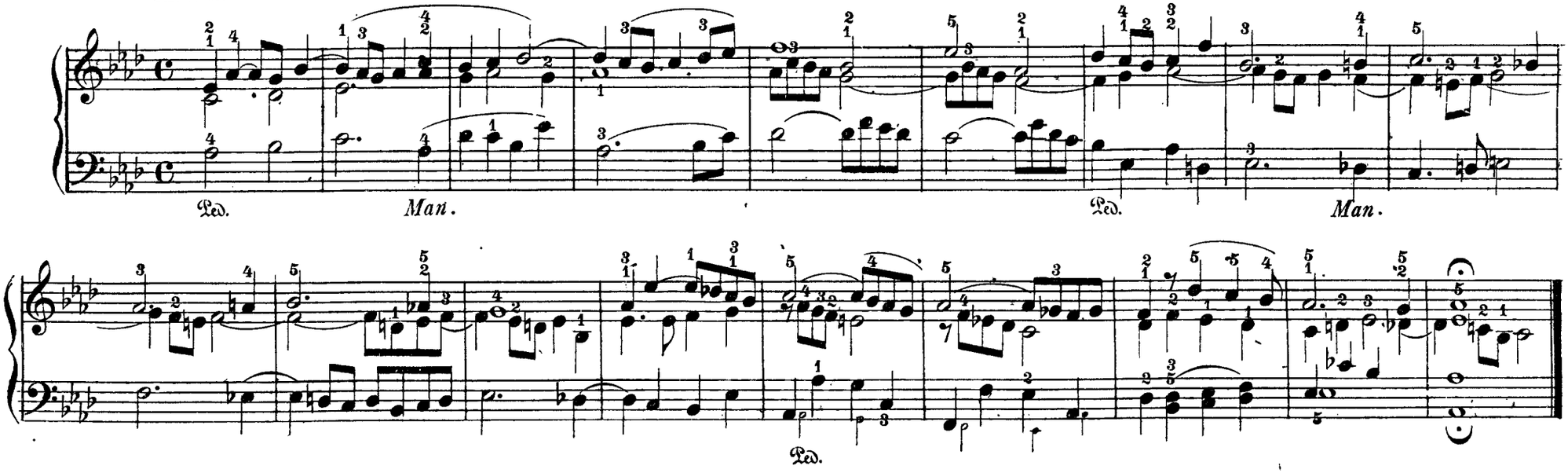


Sw. Clarabella.
Ped. Soft 16ft.

COMMUNION.

CH. H. RINCK.

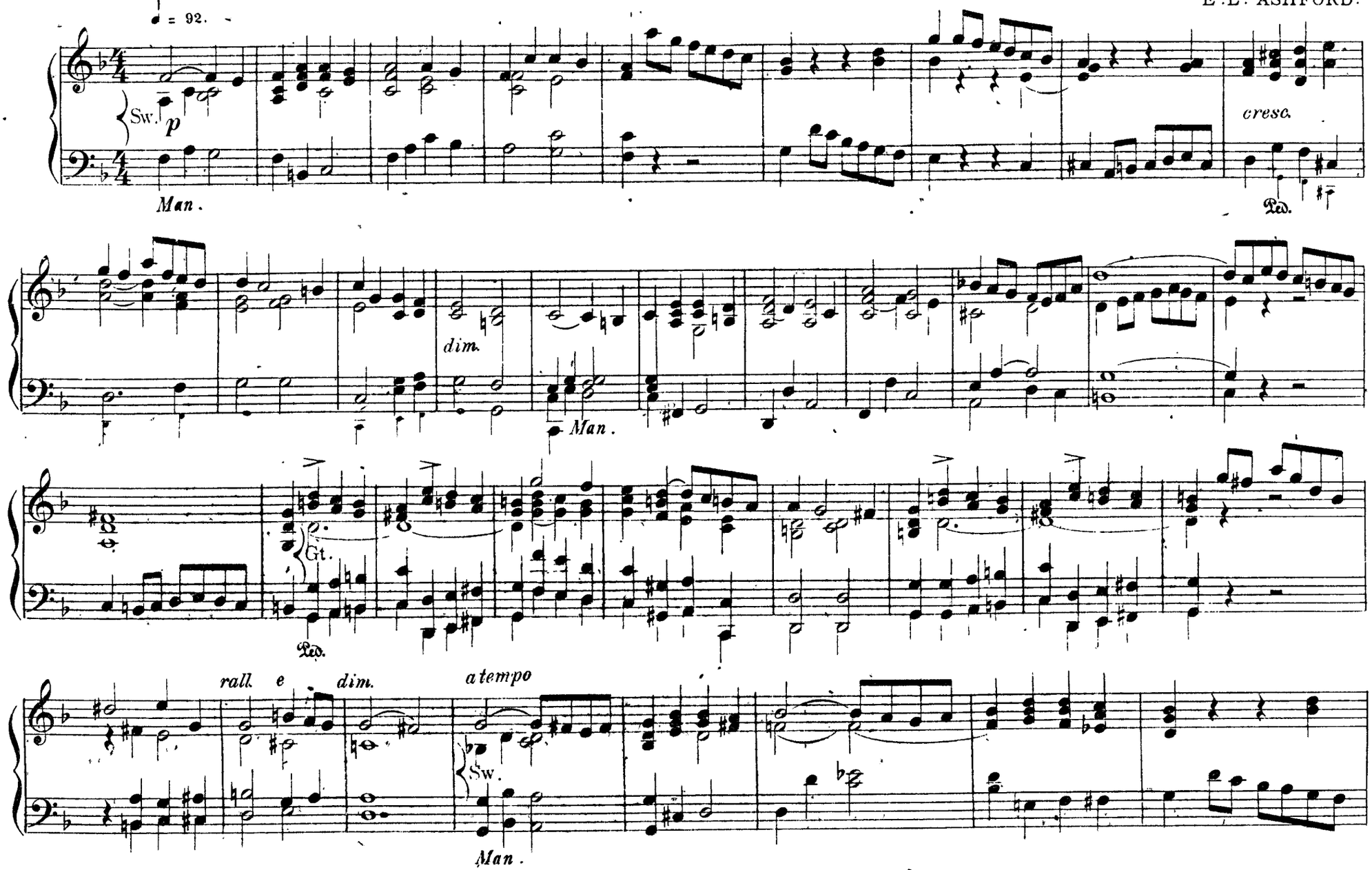
Andante ♩ = 72.

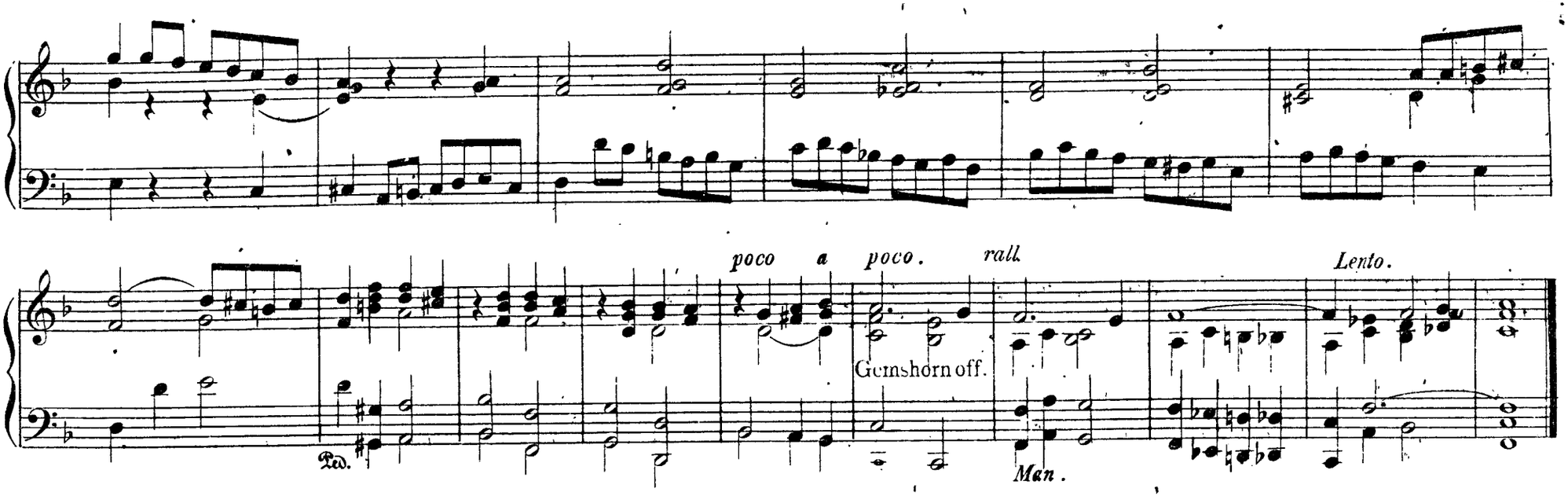


Gt. Open Diapason.
Sw. Stopped Dia. Dul. and Gemshorn.
Ped. Bourdon.

MEDITATION.

E. L. ASHFORD.



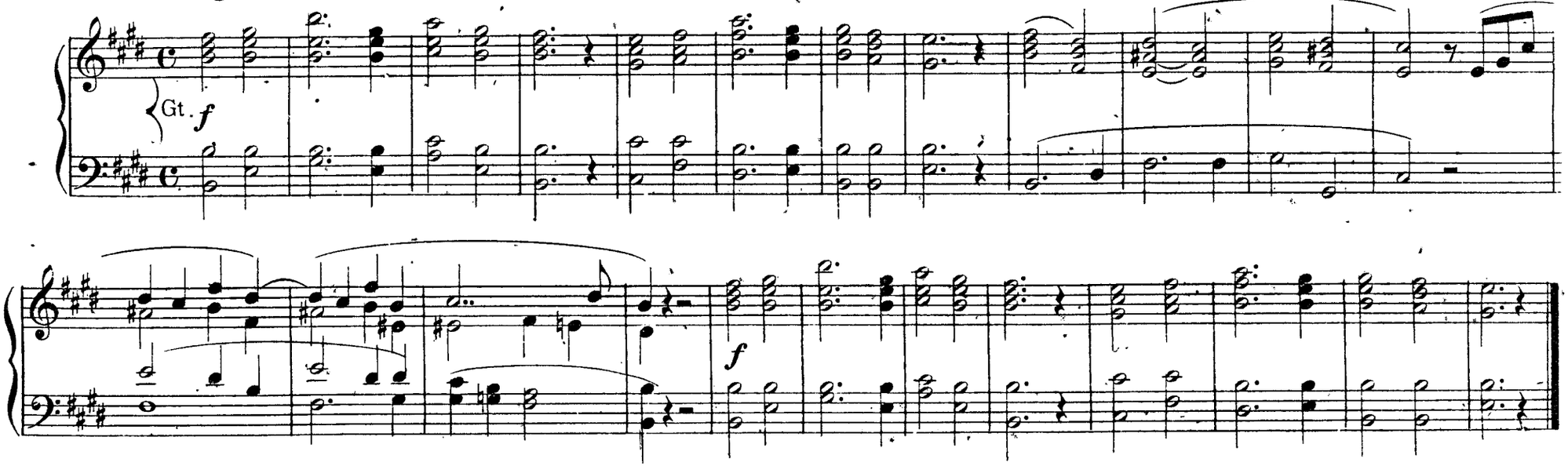


Gt Full.
Ped. Op Dia.

PROCESSIONAL.

Allegro Maestoso ♩ = 132.

LEFÉBURE WÉLY.

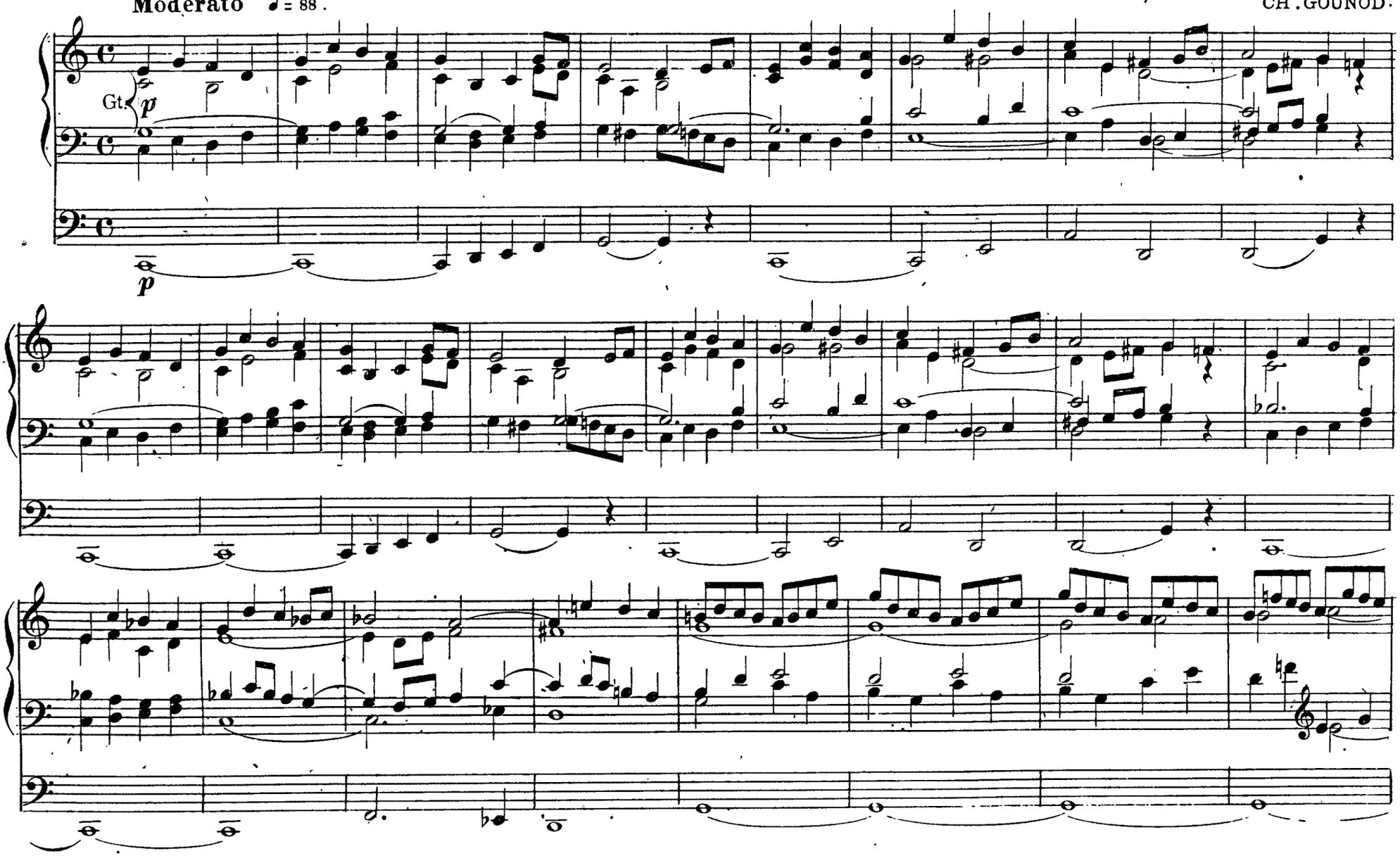


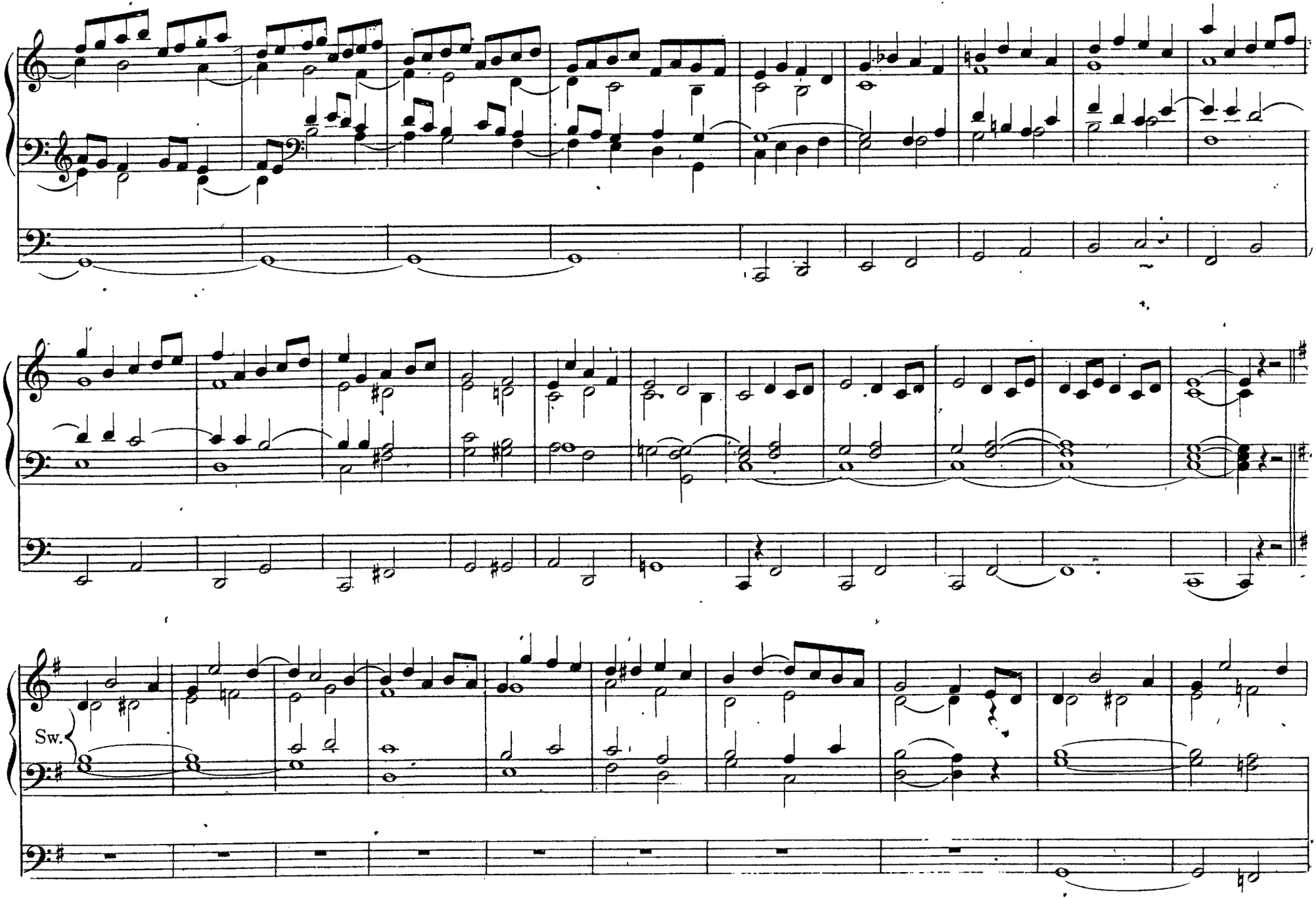
Gt. Dulciana Stopped Dia. and Flute.
Sw. Melodia, 16 ft. Bourdon and Flageolet.
Ped. 16 ft. Bourdon.

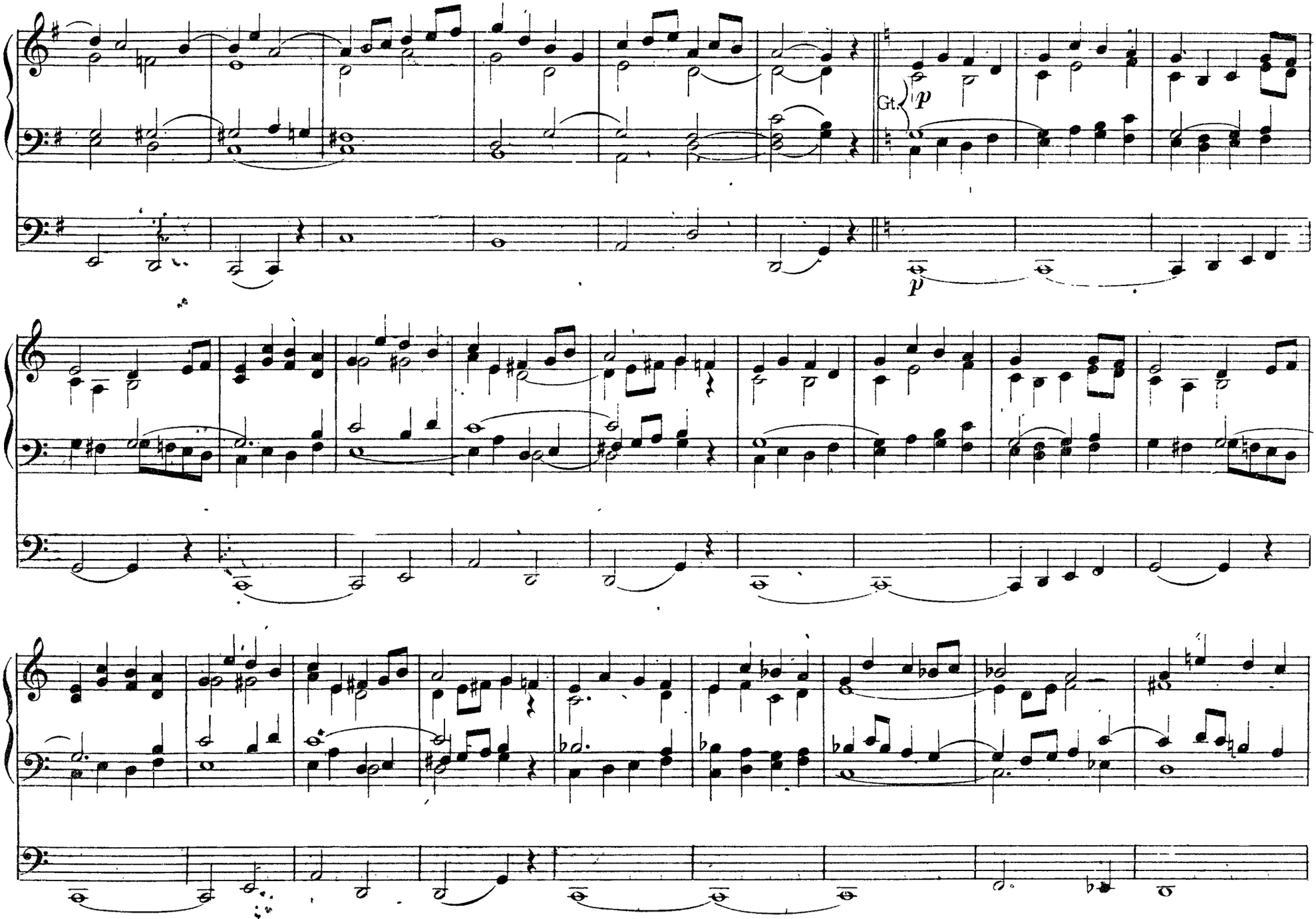
OFFERTOIRE.

Moderato ♩ = 88.

CH. GOUNOD.




Sw.


Gt.
p
p